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THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN,

FROM THE
FIRST INVASION OF IT BY THE ROMANS
UNDER JULIUS CÆSAR.

WRITTEN ON A NEW PLAN.

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THE

THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

The civil and military history of Great Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, to the landing of William Duke of Normandy, A. D. 1066.

SECTION I.

From the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, to A. D. 600.

A. D. 449, to 600. Arrival of the Saxons.

THE succours which the British ambassadors (mentioned in the conclusion of the first chapter of the first book of this work) obtained from the Saxons, came over from the continent in three large ships, under the conduct of two brothers, called *Hengist* and *Horsa*, and landed in the isle of Thanet. They were

A.D. 449, to 600.

received with joy by the diſpirited Britons; who aſſigned them a place for their head-quarters in the iſland where they landed; and made them the moſt ample promiſes of all neceſſary proviſions, and ſuitable rewards for their aſſiſtance [1].

Saxons and Britons defeat the Scots and Picts.

As ſoon as theſe preliminaries were ſettled, the Saxons joined the Britiſh army, and marched againſt the Scots and Picts, who had now puſhed their deſtructive ravages as far as Stamford. Near that place a bloody battle was fought, in which the Britons, inſtructed, animated, and aſſiſted by their new allies, obtained a complete victory over their old enemies, and obliged them to retire into their own country [2]. Tranſported with joy at this victory, they loaded the Saxon chiefs, and their principal followers, with benefits; which made them in no haſte to abandon a country where they were ſo well received [3].

Arrival of another army of Saxons.

The Britons, for ſome time, were ſo far from entertaining any jealouſy of their new allies, that they readily conſented to a propoſal made by Hengiſt, of ſending for a reinforcement of his countrymen, as a further ſecurity againſt any future attempts of their ancient enemies. This reinforcement, conſiſting of about five thouſand of the braveſt warriors, came over in ſeventeen ſhips, and joining the army under Hengiſt, added greatly to his ſtrength and confidence [4].

[1] Chron. Saxon. p. 12. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.
[2] Id. ibid. H. Huntingdon, l. 2. [3] R. Higden. Polychron. l. 5.
[4] Gildæ Hiſt. c. 23.

It

A.D. 449, to 600.

The Saxons reſolve to ſettle in Britain.

It is impoſſible to diſcover whether or not Hengiſt and Horſa, and their followers, when they firſt embarked in this expedition, had formed a deſign of making good a ſettlement for themſelves in Britain; but it plainly appears, from their conduct, as well as from the teſtimony of hiſtorians, that they entertained ſuch a deſign ſoon after their arrival [5]. The beauty and fertility of the Britiſh plains excited them to wiſh, and the unwarlike character and divided ſtate of their inhabitants, encouraged them to hope, for a ſolid eſtabliſhment in this rich and pleaſant country. As ſoon, therefore, as the two Saxon chieftains ſaw themſelves at the head of a conſiderable army of brave determined warriors, they prepared to ſeize ſome part of thoſe territories which they had been invited to defend. With this view they concluded a ſeparate peace with their enemies the Picts, againſt whom they had engaged to wage perpetual war, and began to quarrel with their friends the Britons about their proviſions and promiſed rewards, threatening to do themſelves juſtice, as they called it, by force of arms; and even putting theſe threats in execution, by deſtroying the country about them with fire and ſword, and killing all who fell into their hands [6].

Various conduct of the Bri-

The unhappy Britons were now effectually awakened from their deluſive dreams of enjoying

[5] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.

[6] Id. ibid. Gild. Hiſt. c. 23, 24, 25.

A.D. 449, to 600.

peace and ſafety under the protection of the Saxons, and fully convinced of their folly in calling ſo fierce and faithleſs a people to their aſſiſtance. In their firſt conſternation, great multitudes abandoned their country, and fled into that part of Gaul, which about this time began to be called *Britanny*, from its being chiefly inhabited by Britons; others took ſhelter in the moſt impenetrable woods, where they led a wretched ſavage kind of life, or even periſhed with hunger; while not a few, in order to preſerve their lives, ſubmitted to the moſt abject ſlavery. Many however, on this occaſion, acted a more manly part, and determined to defend themſelves and their country to the laſt extremity[7]. Theſe brave and virtuous Britons, deſpiſing Vortigern, their former leader, for his vices, and hating him for his unfortunate counſels, and too intimate connections with their enemies, declined fighting under his banner, and placed his ſon Vortimer at their head[8].

tons on this occaſion.

War between the Saxons and Britons.

A long and cruel war now broke out between the Saxons and Britons, in which many battles were fought, of which we have but very imperfect accounts. In one of theſe actions, near Ailesford, Horſa, one of the Saxon chieftains, was ſlain, by which his brother Hengiſt became ſole commander of their united forces. This illuſtrious chief, about two years after, gained a great victory over the Britons at Crecanford,

7 Gildæ Hiſt. c. 23, 24, 25.

8 Nennii Hiſt. c. 45.

now

now Crayford, which gave him the poſſeſſion of all Kent, and emboldened him to aſſume the name of *king*, having before this contented himſelf with the humbler title of *heretogen*, or *general*[9]. Thus was the firſt Saxon kingdom, that of Kent, founded, about eight years after the arrival of Hengiſt and his followers in this iſland. A.D. 449, to 600.

The new monarch of Kent, in order to ſtrengthen the Saxon intereſt in Britain, and procure comfortable ſettlements for his family and friends, invited his ſon Octo, and his nephew Ebeſſa, to collect as many followers as they could, and come over into this iſland. Theſe youthful chieftains complied with the invitation; and having plundered the Orkney iſles in their paſſage, arrived with a fleet of forty ſail on the coaſt of Northumberland; of which, together with all the country to the frith of Forth, they took poſſeſſion, without meeting with much oppoſition[10]. This was probably owing to the depopulated ſtate of the country between the two Roman walls, which had been a ſcene of war and devaſtation for near two centuries, and to the alliance and friendſhip which at this time ſubſiſted between the Picts and Saxons. Thus early were the ſouth-eaſt parts of Scotland, as well as the North of England, inhabited by the Saxons; and in thoſe parts, as well as in the Arrival of another army of Saxons.

9 Chron. Saxon. an. 455. 457. Higden. Polychron. l. 5. an. 457.
10 Nennii Hiſt. c. 37.

A. D. 449, to 600.

ſouth of Britain, their language and their poſterity have continued to the preſent times.

Progreſs of the war between the Saxons and Britons.

Though Hengiſt had gained ſeveral victories over the Britons, they did not long allow him to enjoy his new kingdom in tranquillity. On the contrary, they fought many battles againſt him with various ſucceſs, under the conduct of Aurelius Ambroſius, who was deſcended of a Roman family, and inherited the martial virtues of that glorious people[11]. But Hengiſt obtained a great victory, A. D. 465, at Wippidfleet, where no fewer than twelve Britiſh chieftains were ſlain, and only one Saxon chief, named *Wippid*, from whom the place of battle derived its preſent name[12]. About eight years after, he gained another ſtill more deciſive victory; which ſtruck ſuch a terror into the Britons, that they gave him little further diſturbance during the remainder of his reign, which ended with his life, A. D. 488[13].

Æſc, Octo, Hermenric, and Ethelbert, ſucceſſively kings of Kent.

Hengiſt, the firſt king of Kent, and firſt Saxon monarch in Britain, was ſucceeded by his ſon Æſc, who reigned over his little kingdom twenty-four years in profound tranquillity, and left it in that condition to his ſon Octo, who began his reign A. D. 512[14]. This prince was not ſo fortunate as his father had been; for in his reign, which laſted twenty-two years, the countries of Eſſex and Middleſex were taken from him by the Eaſt-Saxons. Octo was ſucceeded by his

[11] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 16.
[12] Chron. Saxon. A.D. 465.
[13] Id. ibid.
[14] Will. Malmſb. c. 1.

ſon

ſon Hermenric, A. D. 534, who reigned thirty-two years, but performed nothing memorable[15]. Ethelbert, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Hermenric, was the greateſt of the Kentiſh kings. In a long and proſperous reign of fifty-ſix years, he obtained many victories, enlarged his dominions, and gained a great aſcendant over all the other Saxon princes of his time. Ethelbert died A. D. 616, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Eadbald, whoſe hiſtory will be purſued in the ſecond ſection of this chapter. A.D. 449, to 600.

Arrival of another army of Saxons, who founded the kingdom of Suſſex.

The ſucceſs of Hengiſt and his followers, encouraged other Saxon chiefs to try their fortunes, and attempt ſettlements in this iſland. One of theſe, named *Ælla*, arrived A. D. 477, with his three ſons, Cymen, Wlencing, and Ciſſa, and a train of martial followers. They landed at Cymenſhore, near Wittering, defeating a body of Britons, who attempted to prevent their landing[16]. Ælla defeated the Britons in a great battle at Mecredeſburn, A. D. 485, and took and deſtroyed Andereda, the ſtrongeſt fortreſs in thoſe parts, A. D. 490[17]. After theſe ſucceſſes he aſſumed the name of *king*, and founded the kingdom of Suſſex; in the government of which he was ſucceeded by his youngeſt ſon Ciſſa, A. D. 515, who had a very long reign. Before the death of Ciſſa this little kingdom became ſo inconſiderable, that his immediate ſucceſſor is not ſo much as named in hiſtory[18].

[15] Hen. Hunt. l. 2.
[16] Chron. Saxon. p. 14.
[17] Id. ibid.
[18] Hen. Hunt. l. 2.

A.D. 449, to 600.

Arrival of other Saxon armies, which founded the kingdom of Weſſex.

Cerdic, another Saxon chieftain, with his ſon Cynric, and a band of choſen warriors, arrived in Britain A. D. 495, and landed in the weſt, at a place which from him was afterwards called *Cerdicſhore* [19]. On the very day of his landing, he engaged and defeated an army of Britons, and from thenceforward continued to wage war againſt them without intermiſſion, for more than twenty years, with various ſucceſs [20]. In the firſt year of the ſixth century, Cerdic received a reinforcement from Germany, under the command of Porta, and his two ſons, Bieda and Megla, who landed at a place ſince called *Portſmouth*. By the aſſiſtance of this reinforcement, he proſecuted the war againſt the Britons with greater vigour than he had done before, and gained ſo many victories, that he aſſumed the title of *king*, and founded the kingdom of the Weſt-Saxons, A. D. 519 [21].

Ambroſius and Arthur command the Britons againſt Cerdic.

Cerdic, the founder of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom, met with a more ſteady and obſtinate reſiſtance from the Britons, than any of the other Saxon chieftains who founded kingdoms in this iſland. This circumſtance was probably owing to the ſuperior courage and abilities of Aurelius Ambroſius, and the famous prince Arthur, who ſucceſſively commanded the Britiſh forces againſt Cerdic and his followers. The firſt of theſe great generals, to whom the Britons gave the name of *Natanleod* (preſerver of the people), fell

[19] Chron. Saxon. p. 15. [20] Id. ibid.
[21] Id. ibid. p. 17. Hen. Huntingdon, l. 2.

in

in battle, with five thouſand of his braveſt troops, A. D. 508[22]. The great actions of Arthur, who ſucceeded Ambroſius in the command of the Britiſh armies, have been celebrated in ſuch romantic ſtrains by the Britiſh bards, and blended with ſo many extravagant fables by Jeffrey of Monmouth, that not only the truth of thoſe actions aſcribed to him, but even the reality of his exiſtence, hath been called in queſtion[23]. There ſeems, however, to be ſufficient evidence, that there was a brave and virtuous prince of this name in thoſe times, who had the chief command among the Britons, and at their head obtained ſeveral victories over the Saxons, though it certainly exceeds the power of the greateſt human ſagacity to diſtinguiſh what is true from what is fabulous in his hiſtory[24]. The laſt and greateſt of thoſe victories was that of Mountbadon, near Bath, A. D. 520[25]. This victory gave ſo great a check to the arms of Cerdic, and his ſon Cynric, that they made little or no progreſs in their conqueſts for ſeveral years. But having received ſome freſh reinforcements from the continent, they defeated the Britons, A. D. 527, at a place, from thence called *Cerdicsford*, and about three years after made an entire conqueſt of the iſle of Wight[26]. In a word, Cerdic, after a long and bloody ſtruggle of near forty years, ſubdued thoſe countries which are now called A. D. 449, to 600.

[22] Chron. Saxon. p. 18. [23] Gaulfrid. Monumut. l. 9, 10.
[24] See Biographia Britannica, vol. i. p. 197, &c.
[25] Hiſt. Gildæ, p. 9. Hen. Hunt. l. 2. [26] Chron. Saxon. p. 18.

Hamp-

A.D 449, to 620.

Hampſhire, *Dorſetſhire*, *Wiltſhire*, *Berkſhire*, and the iſle of Wight. At his death, which happened A. D. 534[27], he was ſucceeded in the throne of Weſſex by his valiant ſon Cynric, who had been the companion of all his toils and victories. This prince reigned twenty-ſix years, and ſupported the character which he had obtained of a brave and prudent general, by gaining ſeveral victories over the Britons[28]. Cynric was ſucceeded, A. D. 560, by his ſon Ceaulin, who was ſtill more ambitious and enterpriſing than his father and grandfather had been. Being aſſiſted by his brother Cutha, he defeated Ethelbert king of Kent, A. D. 568; and nine years after obtained a great victory over the Britons at Durham in Gloceſterſhire, killing three of their princes, Commail, Condidan, and Farinmail[29]. By theſe and ſeveral other victories, he enlarged the boundaries of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom, by adding thoſe countries which are now called *Devonſhire* and *Somerſetſhire*, to his former territories. At length, however, this prince experienced a moſt grievous reverſe of fortune, both in his family and government; for he loſt by death his valiant brother Cutha, and a ſon of the ſame name, no leſs valiant. The other Saxon princes, dreading his ambition, formed a confederacy againſt him, into which ſome of the Britons alſo entered; and he was defeated by their united forces at Wodenſburgh, A. D. 591.

[27] Chron. Saxon. p. 18. [28] Ibid. p. 19, 20. [29] Ibid. p. 22.

To

To complete his misfortunes, his own ſubjects revolted, and drove him into exile, where he ſoon after died [30]. The unhappy Ceaulin was ſucceeded by his nephew Ceolric, who reigned only five years, and dying A. D. 596, left his dominions to his brother Ceolwolf. This prince, being of a martial ſpirit, had wars not only with the Britons, but alſo with the Saxons, Scots, and Picts, which continued through his whole reign of fourteen years [31]. A. D. 449, to 600.

The Saxons having thus far ſucceeded in their attempts, and eſtabliſhed the three ſmall kingdoms of Kent, Suſſex, and Weſſex, other bands of adventurers from the ſame country, were thereby encouraged to try their fortunes, and endeavour to obtain ſettlements in this iſland. Theſe adventurers landed on the eaſt coaſts of Britain, at different times, and under different leaders, whoſe names and actions have not been preſerved in hiſtory [32]. By degrees, however, theſe unwelcome gueſts gained ſo firm a footing, and penetrated ſo far into the country, that three of their chieftains aſſumed the title of *kings*, and founded three other ſmall kingdoms in the eaſt and midland parts of Britain. Theſe were the kingdoms of the Eaſt-Saxons, the Eaſt-Angles, and Mercians. The territories which compoſed the kingdom of the Eaſt-Saxons, were chiefly diſmembered from that of Kent; and conſiſted of the counties of Eſſex, Middleſex, and part of The arrival of other armies of Saxons, and founding of the kingdoms of the Eaſt-Saxons, Eaſt-Angles, and Mercians.

[30] W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 2.
[31] Id. ibid.
[32] Hen. Hunt. l. 2.

Hert-

A.D. 449, to 600.

Hertfordſhire: its firſt monarch was named *Erkenwin*; but the time when he began to reign, and the actions which he performed, are equally unknown[33]. The kingdom of the Eaſt-Angles conſiſted of the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk: its firſt king was Uffa, who began his reign A.D. 575; and from him all his ſucceſſors in that kingdom had the ſurname of *Uffans*. The kingdom of the Mercians comprehended all the middle counties of England to the eaſt of the Severn, and ſouth of Yorkſhire and Lancaſhire: its firſt ſovereign was Creda, who began his reign A.D. 585[34]. The princes who reigned in theſe three petty kingdoms in the ſixth century, performed nothing worthy of being recorded in hiſtory.

Kingdom of Northumberland founded.

Though a colony of Saxons (as hath been already mentioned) had ſettled on the eaſt coaſt of Britain, between the walls of Severus and Antoninus Pius, not long after the middle of the fifth century, we know very little of the hiſtory of that colony for the greateſt part of a century after their arrival. The Saxons being at a great diſtance from their countrymen in the ſouth, and ſurrounded with enemies on all hands, continued long in a weak condition; and being alſo under the command of ſeveral petty chieftains, none of theſe had the preſumption to aſſume the name of *king*[35]. At length, however, they received a very powerful reinforcement from Ger-

33 Hen. Hunt. l. 2.
34 Id. ibid.
35 W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 3.

many

many in a fleet of fifty ſhips which arrived at Flamborough A. D. 547, under the command of Ida; who, being a prince of great wiſdom and valour, aſſumed the royalty, and founded the kingdom of Northumberland, or rather of Bernicia, ſoon after his arrival[36]. The caſtle of Bamburgh, built by Ida, was the capital of this moſt northerly kingdom of the Saxons; which comprehended not only the preſent county of Northumberland, but the counties of the Merſe and the three Lothians, or the whole eaſtern coaſt of the ancient Roman province of Valentia. Ælla, another Saxon chieftain, having ſubdued all the country between the Humber and the Tyne, founded another little ſtate in theſe parts, which was called the kingdom of *Deira*[37]. Theſe two kingdoms were united, not long after, in the perſon of Ethelfrid, the grandſon of Ida; who married Acca, the daughter of Ælla; and having expelled her brother Edwin, added his territories to his own, and thereby founded the powerful kingdom of Northumberland[38]. A.D. 449, to 600.

In this manner were the ſeven Saxon kingdoms, commonly called *the heptarchy*, founded in that part of Britain, which ſoon after began to be called *England*, from the Angles, which were the moſt numerous and powerful tribe of the Saxons[39]. The heptarchy completed.

36 Chron Saxon. p. 19. Hen. Hunt. l. 2. c. 3.
37 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 1. Annal. Bevr. p. 78.
38 W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 3. 39 Camd. Britan. p. 168.

BEFORE

A. D. 449, to 600.

BEFORE we proſecute the hiſtory of theſe Saxon kingdoms any further, it may not be improper to take a very ſhort view of the ſtate of the other nations who inhabited Britain in this period, and of the moſt important events which happened among theſe nations.

Britiſh ſtates.

Though the Saxons had by degrees diſpoſſeſſed the Britons of the moſt valuable part of their country, in which they had erected ſeven kingdoms; yet that unhappy people ſtill continued to poſſeſs a very large tract on the weſt coaſt of Britain, extending from the Land's-end to the frith of Clyde. All the inhabitants of this extenſive country were deſcended from the ſame anceſtors, ſpoke the ſame language, profeſſed the ſame religion, and were in all reſpects the ſame people, except that they were not united under one ſovereign, which would have rendered them invincible, but ſubjected to a prodigious number of petty tyrants, who were almoſt conſtantly at war with one another, and ſeldom joined their forces to reſiſt the common enemy. Gildas, the moſt ancient of our hiſtorians, who was himſelf a Briton, and flouriſhed in thoſe times, gives a moſt ſhocking character of five of theſe princes, who were cotemporaries, and domineered in their ſeveral diſtricts over their wretched ſubjects[40]. It would be highly improper, on many accounts, to ſwell this work with laborious inveſtigations of the genealogies of thoſe ancient Britiſh princes,

[40] Epiſtola Gildæ, p. 1, 2, 3.

or

or minute details of their mutual wars, which could not be rendered either inſtructive or entertaining. If any of our readers have a taſte for ſuch inquiries, they may conſult the works quoted below[41]. It is ſufficient to obſerve, that in this extenſive tract of country there were four conſiderable ſtates or principalities in this period, viz. thoſe of Cornwall, South-Wales, North-Wales, and Cumberland. In each of theſe ſtates there was commonly one prince who was more powerful than the other chieftains or heads of clans, and had ſome degree of authority over them, though each of theſe chieftains was a kind of ſovereign in his own little diſtrict. A.D. 449, to 60.

That part of Britain which lay on the north ſide of the wall of Antoninus Pius, and of the friths of Forth and Clyde, was inhabited, in this period, by two warlike nations, the Scots and Picts; the former poſſeſſing the weſtern, and the latter the eaſtern diviſion of that country. Theſe nations made a conſiderable figure in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, by their frequent incurſions into the Roman provinces, which are recorded by the Greek and Roman writers; but after the departure of the Romans, and the arrival of the Saxons, we loſe ſight of them almoſt entirely for ſome time; and their hiſtory becomes remarkably obſcure for more than two State of the Scots and Picts.

[41] Dr. Borlaſe's antiq. Cornwall, c. 13. Mr Rowland's Mona antiqua, ſect. 11. p. 134. Harding's Chron. Mr. Vaughan's Diſſertation on Britiſh chronol. and Britiſh antiquities revived. Carte's Hiſt. vol. i. p. 210, &c.

centu-

A. D. 449, to 600.

centuries. This obſcurity is not owing to their having performed no actions worthy of remembrance in this period, but either to their having had no hiſtorians to preſerve the memory of thoſe actions, or to their having loſt the works of thoſe hiſtorians, by the injuries of time, and various accidents[42]. From the time of the battle between the Britons and Saxons on one ſide, and the Scots and Picts on the other, near Stamford, A. D. 449, to the beginning of the ſixth century, we know very little with certainty of the hiſtory of theſe two laſt nations. It is highly probable, that, during this period, they were engaged in wars againſt each other, or againſt their common enemies the Saxons ſettled between the walls: but we have no authentic accounts of the particulars of theſe wars. Many modern writers have indeed filled up this chaſm in the annals of the northern parts of Britain, with formal details of the names, actions, characters, and ſucceſſions of the kings of the Scots. But as a little truth is of more value in hiſtory than many fables, we ſhall not abuſe our readers with a repetition of theſe fabulous, or at beſt uncertain tales[43].

Fergus King of Scots.

It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that though we do not know the particulars of thoſe wars which were carried on by the Scots and Picts in the latter part of the fifth century, it ſeems very probable that the Scots gained ſome

42 See Innes's critical eſſay, vol. 2. p. 548—586.

43 See Fordun, Boece, Major, Buchanan, Maitland, &c.

advantages in theſe wars, extended their territories, and became a more powerful and better regulated nation, than they had been in any former period. For there is ſufficient evidence, from ſeveral monuments of the ancient hiſtory of Scotland, which have eſcaped all the injuries of time, and the rage of enemies, that about the beginning of the ſixth century, moſt probably A. D. 503, all the different clans of the Scots in Britain were united and formed into one nation, by Fergus the ſon of Erth, who was certainly the firſt monarch of the Scots nation of whoſe exiſtence we have any tolerable evidence [44]. A. D. 449, to 600.

The dominions of this firſt king of Scots are deſcribed by two of our moſt ancient chronicles, in theſe words: "Fergus filiùs Erth fuit primus "qui de ſemine Chonare ſuſcepit regnum Albaniæ, *i. e.* a monte Drumalban uſque ad mare "Hiberniæ, et ad Inche-Gall." The ſea of Ireland is a boundary which needs no explanation. The weſtern iſlands of Scotland are called *Inche-Galle* by the highlanders of the continent to this day. The only queſtion is concerning the mountain Drumalban, the eaſtern boundary of this firſt kingdom of the Scots, which is believed, by our moſt intelligent antiquaries, to be that ridge of high mountains which runs all the way from Lochlomond, near Dumbarton, on the weſt, to the frith of Tayne, on the eaſt [45]. Boundaries of the kingdoms of the Scots and Picts.

44 See the four old chronicles of the kings of Scotland, publiſhed by father Innes, in his Appendix, N° 4, 5, 6, 7.

45 Dr. M'Pherſon's Diſſertation, diſſ. 18. p. 332.

A.D. 449, to 600. All the reſt of Scotland, to the north of the frith of Forth, and the wall of Antoninus, was in the poſſeſſion of the Picts, and conſtituted the Pictiſh kingdom, which was at leaſt as ancient as that of the Scots, though its antiquities are ſtill more obſcure, occaſioned by the total ſubverſion of that kingdom, and deſtruction of all the ancient monuments of its hiſtory, in the ninth century.

Kings of the Scots. Fergus I. king of Scots, according to the only authentic monuments of our ancient hiſtory, reigned three years; and dying A.D. 506, was ſucceeded by his ſon Domangart, or Dongard; who reigned five years, and was ſucceeded, A.D. 511, by his ſon Congal[46]. This laſt prince, after a reign of twenty-four years, dying A.D. 535, was ſucceeded by his brother Gauran, who reigned twenty-two years. Though Gauran, at his death, left a ſon named *Edhan*, he was ſucceeded by his nephew Conal, the ſon of Congal, who reigned fourteen years, and died A.D. 571. The later Scots hiſtorians, Fordun, Boece, Major, and Buchanan, who are mere moderns in compariſon of thoſe remote ages, have inſerted ſeveral kings between Fergus and his great grandſon Edhan the ſon of Gauran, whoſe names are not to be found in any of our genuine and really ancient monuments, who are therefore to be conſidered as the creatures of their own invention[47]. Theſe writers have alſo aſcribed a variety of actions and adventures to all theſe

46 See the ancient chronicles, apud Innes, Appen. N° 4, 5, 6.

47 Innes's Critical Eſſays, vol. 2. p. 689, &c.

princes, real and imaginary (which may be ſeen in their works), for which they ſeem to have had little or no authority, and which, on that account, merit little or no attention from the friends of truth and genuine hiſtory. A.D. 449, to 600.

Edhan, or Aidan, the ſon of Gauran, ſucceeded his couſin Conal the ſon of Congal, A.D. 571. A few faint rays of light now begin to appear in the hiſtory of the Scots. The name, and ſome of the actions of Aidan, are mentioned by ſeveral ancient authors, who are not unworthy of credit, and who lived at no great diſtance from the times in which he flouriſhed. On the death of Conal, Aidan returned from Ireland (where he had lived ſome years in a kind of exile), and was advanced to the throne, chiefly by the influence of St. Columba, who was, at that time, the great oracle of the Scots and Picts, in civil as well as religious matters [48]. Soon after his acceſſion, he eſtabliſhed a more regular adminiſtration of juſtice in his dominions, and exerted himſelf in ſuppreſſing ſeveral bands of robbers with which the country was infeſted [49]. While he was thus employed, a war broke out between him and Brude king of the Picts, who refuſed to deliver up certain fugitives from juſtice, who had taken ſhelter in his territories: a battle was fought near Dunkeld, in which Aidan obtained the victory, but with the loſs of one of his ſons, and many of his ſubjects. St. Columba, who Aidan king of Scots.

[48] Ogygia, p. 43. Boethius Scot. Hiſt. l. 8. Buchan. l. 5.
[49] Id. ibid.

A.D. 449, to 600.

was equally revered by both the Caledonian monarchs, hearing of theſe ſcenes of ſlaughter with much concern, interpoſed his good offices, and brought about a peace [50]. Aidan, after this, was engaged in two ſucceſſive wars, againſt Brude king of the Picts, and Ethelfred king of the Northumbrian Saxons; in the courſe of which ſeveral bloody battles were fought with various ſucceſs [51]. In the laſt of theſe battles, which happened A. D. 603, at a place called *Dogsaſtane*, being deſerted by his allies the Strathcluyd or Cumbrian Britons, he received a total overthrow, in which he loſt the greateſt part of his army [52]. The good old king did not long ſurvive this grievous diſaſter, but died about the beginning of the year 605, in the thirty-fourth year of his reign, and ſeventy-eighth of his age [53].

We know little or nothing of the hiſtory of the Pictiſh princes who flouriſhed in that period which is the ſubject of this ſection, except their names, and the length of their reigns, which have been preſerved in an ancient chronicle, publiſhed by Mr. Innes, in his Critical Eſſay on the ancient Inhabitants of Scotland [54].

50 Ogygia, p. 43. Boethius Scot. Hiſt. l. 8. Buchan. l. 5. Adamnan. Vit. S. Colum. l. 1. c. 7.

51 See Biograph. Britan. v. 1. p. 68.

52 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 34. Chron. Saxon. p. 24.

53 Id. ibid.

54 Append. N° I.

SECTION II.

The civil and military hiſtory of Great Britain, from A. D. 600 *to the acceſſion of Egbert, the firſt Engliſh monarch,* A. D 801.

A. D. 600, to 801.

State of Britain.

AT the beginning of the ſeventh century, all the ſouth and eaſt coaſts of Britain, from Cornwall to the frith of Forth, were poſſeſſed by various tribes of Saxons, Iutes, and Angles, divided into ſeven petty ſtates or kingdoms, viz. thoſe of Weſſex, Suſſex, Kent, Eſſex, Eaſt-Anglia, Mercia, and Northumberland. The eaſt coaſts of Caledonia, from the frith of Forth to Caithneſs, were occupied by the Picts, now united into one kingdom; and the north and weſt coaſts of that country, from Caithneſs to the frith of Clyde, with the adjacent iſlands, were inhabited by the Scots, now alſo formed into one monarchy. Almoſt all the weſtern coaſts, from the frith of Clyde to the Land's end, were ſtill in the poſſeſſion of the poſterity of the ancient Britons, divided into many little principalities, whoſe numbers, names, and boundaries, were perpetually changing, by the diviſion of the territories of the fathers among their ſons, by conqueſts and other accidents.

An iſland inhabited by ſo many fierce and warlike nations, animated with the moſt implacable enmity againſt each other, derived from their

A.D. 600, to 801.

anceſtors, and every day more and more inflamed by mutual injuries, could not fail to be a ſcene of much confuſion, and of many wars and revolutions. To form theſe wars and revolutions into one clear, perſpicuous, unperplexed narration, is extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, though it muſt be attempted.

The hiſtory of the ſeveral Britiſh ſtates, regulated by the chronology of the Weſt-Saxons.

As all the other ſix kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons fell gradually under the dominion of the Weſt-Saxon princes (from whom Egbert, the firſt Engliſh monarch, and his ſucceſſors, were deſcended), it may not be improper to give our firſt attention to the hiſtory of theſe princes, and to regulate our introduction of the moſt memorable events which happened in all the other ſtates of Britain, by the chronology of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom. By this means the thread of our narration will be preſerved unbroken, and ſome degree of unity and order introduced into this moſt intricate and perplexing period of the hiſtory of Britain.

Cinigeſil and Quicelm kings of Weſſex.

Upon the death of Ceolwulf king of Weſſex, A. D. 611, Cinigeſil, his nephew, the ſon of Ceolric, obtained the government of that kingdom; and ſoon after aſſumed his brother Quicelm to be his partner in the throne[1]. Theſe two princes, who were juſtly admired for the warmth and conſtancy of their fraternal affections, defeated the Britons A. D. 614, at Beamdune, now Bampton, in Devonſhire[2].

[1] Chron. Saxon. p. 25.

[2] Id. ib. Hen. Hunt. l. 2. W. Malmſ. c. 2.

At

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Ethelfred king of Northumberland.

At the acceſſion of Cinigeſil to the government of Weſſex, Ethelfred king of Northumberland was the moſt powerful and enterpriſing prince among the Anglo-Saxons. Having married Acca, the daughter of Alla king of Deira, he got poſſeſſion of that kingdom on the death of his father-in-law, A. D. 588, though Alla left an infant ſon, named *Edwin*, who lived many years in exile, and became afterwards very famous[3]. Ethelfred ſucceeded his father Athelric in the kingdom of Bernicea, A. D. 590, and by that means united the two Northumbrian kingdoms into one. After the great victory which he obtained over Aidan king of Scots, A. D. 603, he had leiſure to purſue his ambitious ſchemes, for the enlargement of his dominions without dreading any interruption from the north. Accordingly he engaged in a long war againſt the neighbouring Britiſh princes; in the courſe of which he obtained a great victory over Brocmail king of Powis, near Cheſter, A. D. 613. Brocmail, before the battle, had perſuaded 1250 of the monks of Banchor to accompany his army, and pray for his ſucceſs, promiſing them his protection. Ethelfred made his firſt attack upon theſe monks, and ſlew no fewer than 1200 of them; which ſtruck ſuch terror into the Britiſh army, that they fled, after a very feeble reſiſtance[4]. By this victory the city of Cheſter, and the adjacent country fell under the dominion of the conqueror.

3 W. Malmſ. c. 3.

4 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 3.

A.D. 600, to 801.

Edwin recovers the kingdom of Northumberland.

Though Ethelfred was thus ſucceſsful in his martial enterpriſes, he was far from being eaſy in his mind. Prince Edwin, his injured brother-in-law, and lawful heir to one half of his dominions, had eſcaped all his ſnares, and was now grown up to man's eſtate. This prince had been carried in his infancy, by ſome friends of his family, to the court of Cadvan prince of North Wales, where he was educated; but an unfortunate quarrel having happened between him and Cadwallon, the eldeſt ſon of Cadvan, he was obliged to abandon the territories of that prince[5]. After this he wandered for ſome time from place to place, in continual fear and danger from the machinations of Ethelfred, till at length he found an aſylum in the court of Ceorl king of Mercia. Here he continued ſome years, married Quoenburga, daughter of Ceorl; and by her had two ſons, Oſfred and Eodfred. But not finding himſelf ſecure from the power of his unrelenting perſecutor, even in the court of his father-in-law, he retired from thence, and put himſelf into the hands of Redwald king of Eaſt-Anglia, who promiſed him his protection. Redwald was by far the beſt and greateſt prince that ever governed the little kingdom of the Eaſt-Angles, and for ſome time reſiſted all the threats and promiſes of Ethelfred. At length, however, theſe promiſes became ſo tempting, and the danger of rejecting them appeared ſo great, that

5 Vaughan's Diſſertat. on Britiſh Chronol.

Red-

Redwald's reſolution began to fail, and he was on the point of making a ſacrifice of his honour to his intereſt, by delivering up his royal gueſt into the hands of his enemy. Edwin received a ſecret intimation of his danger from a faithful friend, who adviſed him to make his eſcape: but this unhappy prince, being weary of a wandering life, and not knowing whither to fly, or whom to truſt, reſolved calmly to wait the event, without betraying any diſtruſt of his protector. This proved a fortunate reſolution; for Redwald having communicated his thoughts concerning Edwin to his queen, that princeſs painted the infamy of betraying his friend in ſuch ſtrong colours, that he changed his mind, and determined to aſſiſt him in recovering his kingdom. With this view he raiſed an army with all poſſible ſecrecy and expedition, and marched directly into Northumberland. Ethelfred was greatly aſtoniſhed at this unexpected attack; but being full of courage, and truſting to his good fortune, which had never yet forſaken him, he collected a ſmall army in haſte, with which he met his enemies on the eaſt banks of the river Idle. Redwald had drawn up his army in excellent order in three bodies; the firſt of which was commanded by his eldeſt ſon, named *Rainer*, the ſecond by himſelf, and the third by Edwin. Ethelfred made a furious attack upon the firſt of theſe bodies, and killed its commander with his own hand. Encouraged with this ſucceſs, he raſhly ruſhed upon the ſecond diviſion; where he A. D. 600, to 801.

was

A.D. 600, to 801.

was overpowered and ſlain, and all his army cut in pieces. This victory was ſo complete, that Edwin met with no further reſiſtance, but took peaceable poſſeſſion of the whole kingdom of Northumberland, A. D. 617, Ethelfred's ſeven ſons having abandoned their country, and fled into Scotland[6].

Edwin eſcapes an aſſaſſination.

Edwin, educated in the ſchool of adverſity, proved one of the beſt and greateſt of the Anglo-Saxon kings[7]. He eſtabliſhed the moſt perfect police and regular adminiſtration of juſtice in his own dominions, and was, either through love or fear, reſpected, and in ſome degree obeyed, by all the other princes of the Heptarchy[8]. Quicelm, king of the Weſt-Saxons, bore this ſuperiority of Edwin's with the greateſt impatience, and attempted to deſtroy him by the moſt diſhonourable means. He ſent one Eumer as his ambaſſador to Edwin, A. D. 626, with inſtructions to kill that prince with a poiſoned dagger, which he carried concealed under his robe. When this pretended ambaſſador, but real aſſaſſin, was introduced to an audience of the Northumbrian monarch in his palace at Aldby, on the banks of the river Derwent, he pulled out his dagger in the midſt of his harangue, and aimed a violent blow at the king; who was on

6 Chron. Sax. p. 27. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 12. Hen. Hunt. l. 2. W. Malmſ. c. 3.

7 This prince was moſt probably the founder of the caſtle and city of Edinburgh, which was anciently called *Edwinſburgh*.

8 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 14. W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 3.

this

this occaſion preſerved from certain death, by the generous heroic affection of Lilla, one of his courtiers, who intercepted the blow with his own body, and fell down dead on the ſpot. The treacherous murderer was ſoon diſpatched by the guards, though he ſlew another of the king's ſervants, named *Frodheri*, in the ſcuffle [9]. Edwin, juſtly incenſed at this baſe attempt upon his life, marched an army into the territories of the Weſt-Saxons, and took a ſevere revenge [10]. A.D. 600, to 801.

War between Edwin and Penda king of Mercia.

Edwin had hitherto been ſucceſsful in all his enterpriſes, and victorious over all his enemies; but a dangerous and formidable rival now appeared upon the ſtage. This was Penda, grandſon of Creda, who mounted the throne of Mercia A.D. 626. Penda was one of the fierceſt and moſt bloody tyrants that ever diſgraced royalty; and though he was fifty years of age when he began his reign, he lived to be the deſtruction of many excellent princes, and the author of many calamities to his country [11]. He ſlew in battle no fewer than three kings of the Eaſt-Angles, Sigbert, Egric, and Annas, who were unhappily his neighbours and cotemporaries [12]. He invaded the territories of the two brothers, kings of Weſſex, and fought a bloody battle againſt them near Cirenceſter, which was ended by night, before victory had declared on either ſide. Next morning, finding that he had ſuſ-

9 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 9.
10 Id. ibid.
11 W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 3.
12 Id. ibid.

tained

A.D. 600, to 801.

tained a great loſs of men in the preceding battle, he conſented to make peace with the royal brothers, that he might be at leiſure to turn his whole forces againſt Edwin king of Northumberland, his moſt powerful rival, and chief object of his malice[13]. To ſecure his ſucceſs in this enterprize, he entered into an alliance with Cadwallon prince of Wales, who had not yet forgotten his quarrel with Edwin in his youth. Theſe two princes having united their forces, invaded Northumberland with a very great army, and defeated and killed Edwin near Hatfield, on October 12th, A. D. 633[14]. This defeat was exceedingly fatal to the army, the family, and dominions of Edwin; his army being almoſt entirely cut in pieces in the action; his children either ſlain in the battle, or driven into exile, and his dominions deſolated by the ferocious conquerors with fire and ſword[15].

Hiſtory of Northumberland continued.

After Penda and Cadwallon had returned into their own dominions from that ſcene of deſolation which they had occaſioned in the north, Oſric, a couſin of Edwin's, ſeized the kingdom of Deira; and Eanfred, the eldeſt ſon of Ethelfred, returning from Scotland, was acknowledged king of Bernicia[16]. But theſe princes did not long enjoy their dignity, being both killed by Cadwallon in the year 634; a year which was eſteemed unfortunate and accurſed by the people

[13] Hen. Hunt. l. 2.
[14] Chron. Saxon. p. 29.
[15] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2.
[16] Chron. Saxon. p. 30.

of

of Northumberland even in the days of Venerable Bede, on account of the apoſtaſy and death of theſe two kings, and the many direful calamities which befel their ſubjects[17]. Cadwallon, who had been the chief author of theſe calamities, was not much longer allowed to enjoy the cruel delight which he took in deſtroying his fellow-creatures. For Oſwald, the ſecond ſon of Ethelfred, after the death of his brother, with whom he returned from Scotland, collected a ſmall army of brave and reſolute men, who were determined to deliver their country, or periſh in the attempt. With this little army he aſſaulted, defeated, and ſlew Cadwallon, at a place called *Hefenfield*, now *Benfield*, in Northumberland, A. D. 635[18]. By this great victory, Oſwald obtained poſſeſſion of the whole kingdom of Northumberlad, which he ſoon reſtored to its former proſperity by his wife and mild adminiſtration. A.D. 600, to 801.

We are not informed in what manner the ever-reſtleſs and turbulent Penda, king of Mercia, was employed in this interval. But at length obſerving that Oſwald, king of Northumberland, had arrived at a degree of power and proſperity equal to that of his great predeceſſor Edwin, his jealouſy was awakened, and he reſolved on his deſtruction. To accompliſh this he declared war againſt him, which was carried on for ſome years with various ſucceſs. At laſt a deciſive battle Wars between Oſwald king of Northumberland and Penda.

17 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 1.

18 Id. ibid. c. 2.

was

A. D. 600, to 801.

was fought on Auguſt 5th, A. D. 642, at a place called *Maſerfilth*, in which the good king Oſwald was defeated and ſlain, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and eleventh of his reign[19]. Penda, as uſual, made a cruel uſe of his victory; and after he had done all the miſchief he could in the open country, beſieged Bebbanburgh, the capital city of Bernicia. Here he met with an unexpected repulſe, which Beda aſcribes to the wonder-working prayers of Aidan, biſhop of Holy-Iſland. After Penda had made many aſſaults without ſucceſs, he collected an immenſe quantity of wood and other combuſtible materials, which he piled up as near the walls as poſſible; and when he obſerved the wind bearing ſtrong towards the city, he ſet fire to the pile, in hopes of burning the town. But when the flames were ſurmounting the walls, and threatening all within them with deſtruction, the wind ſuddenly changed, and blew them with ſtill greater violence on the beſiegers, burning ſome of them to death, and obliging the reſt to fly[20]. After the death of Oſwald, the Northumbrian kingdom was again divided, Oſwi his brother ſucceeding him in Bernicia, and Oſwin his couſin in Deira.

Wars between Cenwal king of Weſſex and Penda king of Mercia, &c.

Cinigeſil king of Weſſex died A. D. 643 (his royal brother Quicelm having died a few years before), and was ſucceeded by his ſon Cenwal. This prince, ſoon after his acceſſion, divorced

19 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 9.

20 Id. ibid. c. 16.

his

his queen, who was ſiſter to Penda king of Mercia: an action which drew upon him, as he might have foreſeen, the indignation of that powerful and impatient monarch; who invaded his dominions, defeated him in ſeveral battles, and at laſt obliged him to abandon his country, and take ſhelter in the court of Annas, king of the Eaſt-Angles, A. D. 645[21]. When he had remained there about three years in exile, he found an opportunity of recovering his kingdom, which he thenceforward defended with great valour and ſucceſs, during a long reign of thirty-one years[22]. The furious Penda being enraged at Annas for the kind reception he had given to Cenwal in his diſtreſs, invaded his territories, A. D. 654, killed him in battle, and cut almoſt his whole army in pieces[23]. But heaven was now preparing to take vengeance on this hoary tyrant, and deſtroyer of ſo many kings. Though he was connected with Oſwi king of Northumberland, by a double marriage between their children (Alchfred, the ſon of Oſwi, being married to Cyneburga, the daughter of Penda, and Peada, the ſon of Penda, to Alchfleda, the daughter of Oſwi), nothing could diſſuade him from invading the territories of that prince. Oſwi remembering that two of his greateſt predeceſſors, Edwin and Oſwald, had been ſlain, and innumerable calamities brought upon his A. D. 600, to 801.

[21] Chron. Saxon. p. 32. [22] Hen. Hunt. l. 2. W. Malm. c. 2.
[23] Hen. Hunt. l. 2.

country,

A. D. 600, to 80.

country, by this dreadful adverſary, endeavoured to avert the impending ſtorm, by offering the moſt valuable preſents. But all theſe offers were rejected with diſdain, and Penda entered Northumberland at the head of a powerful army, accompanied by Ethelhirc king of the Eaſt-Angles, and Edelwald king of Deira, his allies, or rather vaſſals; threatening to extirpate the whole inhabitants without exception. Oſwi, perceiving that nothing under heaven could preſerve himſelf, his family, and ſubjects, from deſtruction, but their own activity and courage, collected all his forces, and boldly marched to attack his enemies, though greatly inferior to them in numbers. The two hoſtile armies met A. D. 655, on the banks of a river, then called *Wenuaid*, now *Broad-Arc*, which runs by Leeds, where a bloody battle was fought; in which the Northumbrians, exerting the moſt deſperate valour, and fighting for their very exiſtence as a nation, obtained a complete victory, killed Penda and Ethelhirc, and about thirty other chieftains, with a prodigious number of their followers [24]. By this great victory, Oſwi not only preſerved his own dominions from ruin, but got poſſeſſion of the whole kingdom of Mercia; the ſouthern part of which beyond the Trent, he voluntarily beſtowed upon Peada, the eldeſt ſon of Penda, and his own ſon-in-law. But this prince being ſlain ſoon after by treachery, Oſwi governed the

[24] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 24.

Mercian

Mercian territories about three years by his lieutenants; who were then expelled by a combination of the nobles, and Wulphere, the ſecond ſon of Penda, was by them raiſed to the throne of Mercia A.D. 659[25]. From this period, Oſwi, king of Northumberland, ſeems to have lived in perfect peace with Wulphere king of Mercia during his whole reign; and an uncommon degree of tranquillity prevailed over all the kingdoms of the heptarchy for many years after the death of the furious Penda. This affords us a favourable opportunity of taking a very ſhort view of the moſt important events which happened in other parts of Britain, from the beginning of the ſeventh century, to the death of Cenwall king of Weſſex, A. D. 672. A.D. 600, to 801.

The hiſtory of the Britons of Cornwall, Wales, and Cumbria, is exceedingly obſcure in this period. Being under the government of many petty princes or chieftains, they were almoſt engaged in continual broils and quarrels amongſt themſelves; which prevented them from giving much diſturbance to their common enemies the Saxons. Cadwallon, the cotemporary, enemy, and conqueror, of Edwin king of Northumberland, was by far the moſt powerful of the Britiſh princes of thoſe times; and after his death, which happened A. D. 635, the Britons ſeem to have been quite diſpirited, and to have loſt all hopes of recovering their country from the Hiſtory of Wales.

[25] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 24.

A.D. 600, to 811. Saxons. They fought indeed ſeveral battles againſt the Saxons after this; particularly one againſt Cenwall king of Weſſex at Bradford upon Avon, A. D. 652; and another againſt the ſame prince at Pen in Somerſetſhire, A. D. 658; but they fought with little ſpirit, and were conſtantly defeated [26].

Hiſtory of Scotland. Nor is the hiſtory of the Scots much more clear and certain in this period than that of the Britons; and that of the Picts is almoſt quite unknown. This acknowledgment concerning the Scots will, perhaps, appear ſurpriſing and offenſive to thoſe who peruſe the works of Fordun, Boethius, Buchanan, and other Scots hiſtorians, and there find a regular ſucceſſion of many kings of Scotland in thoſe times, with formal deſcriptions of their characters, and long details of their actions. But as all theſe writers are mere moderns, in compariſon of the times we are now conſidering, and ſeldom condeſcend to quote their authorities, thoſe who do not yield an implicit faith to all their narrations, ought not to be too ſeverely cenſured: and a writer who thinks himſelf obliged to omit ſome of theſe narrations, as at beſt uncertain, will not be greatly blamed by the real friends of truth.

Continued. Aidan king of Scots dying A. D. 605, was ſucceeded by his eldeſt ſurviving ſon Eoach Buydhe, or Eoach the Yellow, ſo called from

[26] Chron. Saxon. p. 33—39.

the

the colour of his hair[27]. This prince, who is named *Eugenius* by our modern hiſtorians, is ſaid to have been a great favourite of the famous St. Columba, who pointed him out to his father Aidan as his ſucceſſor, at a time when he had three elder ſons living[28]. Some of our later hiſtorians repreſent Eugenius as a peaceful, others as a warlike prince, continually fighting, either againſt the Picts or Saxons: a ſufficient proof that they knew nothing with certainty of his character or actions[29]. The only thing recorded of him with any tolerable evidence is, that he gave a kind reception and hoſpitable entertainment to the ſeven ſons of Ethelfred king of Northumberland, who fled into Scotland with their ſiſter Elba, and many followers, A. D. 617[30]. A.D. 600, to 801

In the two ancient catalogues of the kings of Scots, publiſhed by Father Innes, Kinath-Kerr, or Kinath the Left-handed, the ſon of Conal, is placed immediately after Eoach Buydhe, and is ſaid to have reigned three months: though all our modern hiſtorians, for what reaſon I know not, have inverted this order, and placed the ſhort reign of Kenneth before that of Eugenius[31]. However this may be, it is generally agreed, that Ferchar, the eldeſt ſon of Eochod, or Eugenius, aſcended the throne of Scotland A. D. Continued.

27 See Innes's Eſſays, Append. N° 4.
28 Adamnan. Vita Columb. l. 1. c. 8.
29 Fordun, c. 32. Buchan. l. 5.
30 Fordun, c. 33. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 12.
31 Fordun, c. 51. Buchan. l. 5.

A.D. 600, to 801.

622; concerning whom Fordun confeſſes he knew nothing; though two more modern hiſtorians pretend to have diſcovered, by what means they do not inform us, that he was a very wicked prince; and that being caſt into priſon by his nobility for his crimes, he there put an end to his own life [32].

Continued.

Dovenald Breach, or Donald the Speckled, ſucceeded his brother Ferchar A. D. 632. He is ſaid to have been a good prince, and to have generouſly aſſiſted the ſons of Ethelfred king of Northumberland, in returning into that country, and recovering their paternal dominions [33]. He was ſucceeded A. D. 646, by his nephew Ferchar Fada, or Ferchar the Long [34]. Though Fordun, the moſt ancient of the Scots hiſtorians, ſeems to have known nothing of the character of this prince, two of his ſucceſſors, Boethius and Buchanan, deſcribe his vices as particularly as if they had been perſonally acquainted with him, and repreſent him as a monſter of impiety, cruelty, and ſenſuality [35]. What credit is due to this repreſentation, let the reader judge. Upon the death of Ferchar, A. D. 664, Maldwin, his couſin, the ſon of Dovenald Breach, mounted the throne. In the ancient catalogues of the kings of Scots, the name of this prince is inſerted immediately after that of his father, and before that of his couſin

[32] Boet. l. 9. Buchan. l. 5.
[33] Fordun, c. 34.
[34] Fordun, c. 37.
[35] Boeth. l. 9. Buchan. l. 5.

Ferchar.

Ferchar [36]. But Fordun and his followers have changed this order of ſucceſſion, without giving any reaſons for the change. Maldwin is repreſented by all our hiſtorians as a wiſe and good prince, who governed his own ſubjects with prudence and juſtice, and maintained peace with all his neighbours [37]. In the fifth year of this king's reign, a moſt dreadful peſtilence raged in all the nations of Europe, except among the Scots and Picts; of which Fordun gives a particular account from Adamnan abbot of Jona, who flouriſhed in thoſe times [38]. Maldwin ended his life and reign A. D. 684. A. D. 600, to 891.

The civil and military hiſtory of the Pictiſh nation (who poſſeſſed the eaſtern and beſt part of Caledonia), from the beginning of the ſeventh century to the death of Maldwin king of Scots, is entirely loſt, except the names of their kings, which may be ſeen in the Appendix. Before we take our leave of the north for ſome time, it may not be improper to take notice, that from the death of Aidan king of Scots A. D. 605, to the death of Maldwin A. D. 684, an uninterrupted peace ſubſiſted between the Scots and Saxons; a thing not very common between two ſuch fierce and warlike neighbours. The reaſons of this long ceſſation of hoſtilities ſeem to have been theſe: The Scots were ſo much weakened and diſpirited by the great loſs which Hiſtory of the Picts, and a long peace between the Saxons and Scots.

36 Innes, Append. No. 4, 5.
37 Fordun, l. 3. c. 40.
38 Fordun, l. 3. c. 40.

A. D. 600, to 801.

they ſuſtained in the fatal battle of Dægfaſtane, A. D. 603, that for a long time they had neither power nor inclination to make any further attempts upon the Saxons; and the Saxons were ſo much employed in mutual quarrels, that they had no leiſure to diſturb the Scots. After the return of the family of Ethelfred from Scotland, A. D. 634, where they had been kindly entertained ſeventeen years, a cordial friendſhip (ſtrengthened by mutual good offices, and cheriſhed by the means of thoſe Scottiſh clergy who converted the Northumbrian Saxons to Chriſtianity) took place between the Scots and Saxons, and continued many years.——But it is now time to return to the ſouth, and purſue the civil and military hiſtory of the Anglo-Saxons from the death of Cenwall king of Weſſex, A. D. 672.

Hiſtory of Weſſex.

Cenwall having died without iſſue, the ſucceſſion to the throne of Weſſex remained for ſome time in an unſettled ſtate. Sexburga, his widow, who was a princeſs of uncommon ſpirit and abilities, kept poſſeſſion of the chief authority to her death, which happened about a year after that of her huſband[39]. After this, the ſucceſſion was diſputed between Eſkwin, a prince of the royal family, and Kentwin, brother to the late king Cenwall, who reigned for about three years over different diſtricts[40]. Wulphere king of Mercia, ſecond ſon of the long redoubted Penda,

39 Chron. Saxon. p. 41.

40 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 4. c. 12.

had

had an engagement with Eſkwin, one of theſe competitors, at Bedwin in Wiltſhire, A. D. 675[41]. Wulphere did not long ſurvive this action, but dying that ſame year, was ſucceeded by his brother Ethelred[42]; and Eſkwin dying the year after, Kentwin, his competitor, became ſole monarch of the Weſt-Saxons[43]. A.D. 600, to 801.

History of Suſſex, Eſſex, Eaſt-Anglia, and Kent.

At the acceſſion of Kentwin to the throne of Weſſex, A. D. 676, the three ſmall kingdoms of Suſſex, Eſſex, and Eaſt-Anglia, had fallen into a ſtate of imbecility, and ſubjection to their powerful neighbours, the kings of Mercia and Weſſex. This was occaſioned by diſputes about the ſucceſſion in theſe little ſtates, upon the failure of the male iſſue of their reſpective founders, and by various other accidents. A few years after, the kingdom of Kent, the moſt ancient of the Saxon ſtates in Britain, fell into the ſame condition, from the ſame cauſes. From henceforward, therefore, we ſhall hear very little of theſe ſmall dependent ſtates, as few of the events which happened in them are worthy of a place in hiſtory.

History of Weſſex, Mercia, and Northumberland.

We ſhall now purſue the hiſtory of the three more powerful and flouriſhing kingdoms of Weſſex, Mercia, and Northumberland, which were at this time governed by the three following princes; Kentwin, king of Weſſex; Ethelred, the youngeſt ſon of Penda, and brother of Wulphere, king of Mercia; Egfrid, ſon of

[41] Chron. Saxon. p. 41. [42] Id. ibid. [43] Id. p. 44.

A. D. 600, to 801.

Oſwi, king of Northumberland. Theſe three princes were reſtleſs and ambitious, and engaged in almoſt conſtant wars.

Kentwin king of Weſſex employed his arms chiefly againſt the Britons of Cornwall and Somerſetſhire, and over-run thoſe countries, having penetrated as far as the Briſtol channel, A. D. 681[44]. Ethelred king of Mercia, who began his reign A. D. 675, made his firſt efforts againſt the little kingdom of Kent, which he laid waſte[45]. After this, he turned his arms againſt Egfrid king of Northumberland, from whom he recovered Lincolnſhire, and againſt whom he fought a very bloody battle A. D. 679, on the banks of the Trent; in which Elfwin, an amiable young prince, brother to king Egfrid, was ſlain. A peace was happily brought about between theſe two monarchs, by the mediation of Theodore archbiſhop of Canterbury; after which Ethelred ſpent the remainder of his long reign in a ſtate of tranquillity[46]. But Egfrid the Northumbrian monarch did not imitate his example: for no ſooner was the pacification between him and Ethelred concluded, than he turned his arms againſt the Scots and Picts. In the firſt year of this war, A. D. 614, he gained ſome advantages againſt the Scots; but the year following, having ventured too far into the enemy's country, he was defeated and ſlain, and almoſt his whole army cut in pieces by the

[44] Chron. Saxon. p. 45. [45] Id. p. 44.
[46] Bedæ Hiſt Eccleſ. l. 4. c. 21.

Picts,

Picts[47]. This defeat was very fatal to the kingdom of Northumberland. The fine country between the frith of Forth and the river Tweed, on the eaſt, was over-run by the Picts; and in the weſt, the Britons of Galloway and Cumberland recovered their liberty and their country; by which the boundaries of the Northumbrian kingdom were very much contracted. The prince who reigned over the Scots when Egfrid invaded them was Eochol Renneval, or the Crooked-noſe, called by our late hiſtorians *Eugenius* IV. who ſucceeded his uncle Maldwin A. D. 684, and died A. D. 687[48]. The Pictiſh king who defeated and ſlew the Northumbrian monarch was Brude III. who reigned from A. D. 674 to 695[49]. A.D. 600, to 801.

Kentwin king of Weſſex dying A. D. 685, was ſucceeded by Ceodwalla, a prince of the blood-royal, who greatly enlarged his dominions by the entire reduction of the kingdom of Suſſex, and made ſeveral very deſtructive inroads into the kingdom of Kent; in one of which he loſt his brother Mollo, who was ſurrounded, and burnt to death, with all his attendants, by the enraged enemy, A. D. 687[50]. The year after this tragical event, Ceodwalla being ſeized with remorſe for the cruelties which he had committed in the courſe of his wars, took a journey to Rome, where he died ſoon after his arrival, on April 20, A. D. 689; and was ſucceeded by his couſin Continued.

47 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 4. c. 26.
48 Fordun, l. 3. c. 43.
49 Innes, v. 1. p. 138.
50 Chron. Saxon. p. 45, 46.

Ina,

A. D. 600; to 801.

Ina, who proved one of the beſt and greateſt princes of the age in which he lived [51]. Aldfrid, a natural brother of Egfrid's, had ſucceeded that unhappy prince in the kingdom of Northumberland A. D. 685; but being more addicted to letters than to arms, he contented himſelf with governing his own ſubjects with wiſdom and juſtice, without diſturbing any of his neighbours [52]. Ethelred ſtill continued to reign in Mercia; but had conceived an abhorrence of war, and ſpent the greateſt part of his time in acts of devotion. Theſe circumſtances were favourable to Ina's deſign of enlarging his dominions. With this view, and in order to revenge the cruel death of his relation Mollo, he invaded Kent A. D. 694; but was prevailed upon, by a great ſum of money, to deſiſt from that enterpriſe [53]. He then turned his arms againſt the Britons, and obtained a great victory over Gerwint king of Wales, by which he made an entire conqueſt of Cornwall and Somerſetſhire, and annexed them to his kingdom [54]. While Ina was thus employed, Ethelred king of Mercia, who had lived many years like a monk upon the throne, deſcended from it A. D. 704, and became a monk in reality, leaving his crown to his nephew Cenred [55]. This prince was ſoon after ſeized with the faſhionable frenzy of thoſe times, abandoned his throne, and went to Rome A. D.

[51] Chron. Saxon. p. 45, 46. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 75.
[52] Id. ibid. l. 4. c. 26.
[53] Chron. Saxon. p 48.
[54] Hen. Hunt. l. 4.
[55] Chron. Saxon.

709,

709, in company with another royal vagabond, Offa king of the Eaſt-Saxons; and there they both embraced the monaſtic life[56]. Aldfrid, the learned king of Northumberland, after a peaceful reign of twenty years, had died at Dryffield in December A. D. 704, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Oſred, a young prince about eight years of age[57]. The Picts, after the great victory which they obtained over Egfrid, had made ſeveral incurſions into Northumberland. In one of theſe, A. D. 699, they defeated and killed one Berht, a Northumbrian nobleman[58]. But they were not ſo ſucceſsful in another invaſion A. D. 711; for being encountered by Berectfrid, regent of the kingdom in the minority of Oſred, they were defeated, and ſo great a number of them ſlain, that it in ſome meaſure revenged the death of Egfrid and Berht[59]. Ceolred, the ſon of Ethelred, who ſucceeded his couſin Cenred in the throne of Mercia, was not of ſo monkiſh a diſpoſition as his two predeceſſors; but being jealous of the increaſing power of Ina king of Weſſex, he declared war againſt him. In the courſe of this war, a very bloody battle was fought A. D. 715, at Wodneſbeorth, in which neither party had any reaſon to boaſt of victory, and both ſuffered ſo much, that it put an end to all further hoſtilities[60]. Ceolred did not long A.D. 600, to 801.

[56] Chron. Saxon. p. 50. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 19.
[57] Id ibid. l. 5. c. 18.
[58] Chron. Saxon. p. 49.
[59] Id. p. 50. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.
[60] Id. ibid. Chron. Saxon. p. 51.

A.D. 600, to 801.

ſurvive this battle; but dying A.D. 716, was ſucceeded by Ethelbald, who was next heir to the crown. The ſame year proved fatal to Oſred, the young king of Northumberland, who was then ſlain, though we are not informed in what manner, or by whom[61]. Cenred, a prince of the blood-royal, ſeized the crown; of which he kept poſſeſſion only two years, and was then ſucceeded by Oſric, the ſecond ſon of Aldfrid, who performed nothing memorable; but dying A.D. 726, left his kingdom to Ceolwolf, who was brother to his predeceſſor Cenred, and patron to the venerable hiſtorian Bede[62].

England enjoyed peace for ſome years.

England at this period enjoyed an uncommon degree of tranquillity for ſeveral years. This ſeems to have been owing to the unſettled ſtate of the Northumbrian kingdom; to the libidinous diſpoſition of Ethelbald king of Mercia, which engaged him in other purſuits than thoſe of ambition; and to the great change which age had produced in Ina king of Weſſex, who ſpent the laſt years of his reign in the beneficent works of peace; and at laſt retired to Rome A.D. 728 (with his queen Ethelburga), and there ended his days in a monaſtery[63].——Here it may not be improper to take a very ſhort view of the chief things which had been lately tranſacted in the other parts of Britain.

Hiſtory of Wales.

The unhappy Britons, who had been deprived of the moſt valuable part of their country by the

[61] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 24. [62] Id. l. 5. c. 23.
[63] W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 2.

Saxons,

Saxons, ſtill continued to ſuffer new loſſes, and to be confined within narrower and narrower bounds. By the Weſt Saxon kings, Kentwin and Ina, they were deprived of all the country on the ſouth ſide of the Briſtol channel; and by the Northumbrian princes, thoſe of Cumberland and Galloway were reduced to a ſtate of great ſubjection. From this indeed theſe laſt obtained a temporary relief by the defeat and death of Egfrid, and the misfortunes which thereby came upon the kingdom of Northumberland: but this relief was not of very long duration, as we ſhall preſently obſerve. The moſt powerful prince among the Britons, in the end of the ſeventh and beginning of the eighth century, was named *Gerwint*, the ſame who was defeated by Ina king of Weſſex, A. D. 710[64]. After the death of this prince, A. D. 720, Roderic Malwynoc, a deſcendant of the famous Cadwallon, was the moſt conſiderable of the Britiſh princes, and is ſaid (by the Welſh hiſtorians) to have fought many battles, with various ſucceſs, againſt the kings of Weſſex and Mercia, who were his cotemporaries[65]. A.D. 600, to 801.

Eochol Renneval, or Eugenius IV. king of Scots, dying A. D. 687, was ſucceeded by Ewen, or Eugenius V. ſon of Ferchar the Long. On this occaſion the modern Scotch hiſtorians have again departed from the order of ſucceſſion in the moſt ancient catalogues of the kings of Scots, in which Arnchellac, or Armkelleth, is Hiſtory of Scotland.

64 Chron. Saxon. p. 50. 65 Powel's Hiſt. Wales, p. 15.

intro-

A.D. 600, to 801.

introduced before Ewen[66]. However this may be, it is agreed, that theſe two princes reigned from A. D. 687 to A. D. 698, and had ſeveral ſkirmiſhes, but no deciſive battle, with their neighbours the Picts[67]. On the death of his immediate predeceſſor Heatagan, the ſon of Findan, called Eugenius VI., became king of Scots, and put an end to all diſputes with the Picts for ſome time, by marrying Spondana, daughter of their king[68]. Fordun, the moſt ancient of the Scotch hiſtorians, gives an excellent character of this prince; and ſeems to have known nothing of the ſtrange improbable tale, of his having been tried by his nobles for the murder of his queen, which is ſo formally related by more modern writers[69]. Murdoch, the ſon of Armkelleth, ſucceeded his uncle Heatagan A. D. 715, and reigned fifteen years in the moſt profound peace[70].

An univerſal peace in Britain.

The former part of the eighth century appears to have been the moſt peaceful period of the ancient hiſtory of Britain ſince the arrival of the Saxons. At that time the long and violent ſtorms which had agitated all the nations inhabiting this iſland for ſeveral ages, with very little intermiſſion, ſubſided into an univerſal calm, which is thus deſcribed by the venerable hiſtorian Bede, in the concluſion of his moſt valuable work: "At this time the Picts are in a ſtate of

66 Innes, Append. N° 4, 5. 67 Fordun, l. 3. c. 43, 44.
68 Id. c. 45. 69 Boet. Hiſt. Scot. l. 9. Buchan. Scot. Hiſt. l. 5. 70 Fordun. l. 3. c. 45.

"friend-

" friendſhip with the Engliſh, and of conformity A. D. 600, to 801.
" with the univerſal church in truth and peace.
" The Scots too, contented with their own terri-
" tories, are forming no plots againſt the Eng-
" liſh. Nay, even the Britons themſelves,
" though animated with hereditary hatred againſt
" the Engliſh, and at variance with the Catholic
" church about the time of keeping Eaſter, find-
" ing themſelves baffled both in their civil and
" religious conteſts, have ſunk into a ſtate of
" tranquillity, ſome under their own princes,
" and ſome under the dominion of the Engliſh.
" This is the preſent ſtate of all the nations of
" Britain in this year 731. What will be the
" conſequence of this tranquillity, which hath
" made ſo many, both of the nobility and com-
" mon people, in this kingdom of Northum-
" berland, abandon the uſe of arms, and crowd
" into monaſteries, time alone can diſcover[71]."
With extreme regret, we muſt here take our leave of this venerable hiſtorian, who hath hitherto been our chief companion and guide through the intricate mazes of the Anglo-Saxon hiſtory.——But it is now time to turn our attention towards the South.

Hiſtory of Weſſex, Mercia, and Northumberland.

Ina, king of the Weſt-Saxons, at his departure for Rome, A. D. 729, left his throne and kingdom to Ethelhard, brother to his queen Ethelburga, and a prince of the royal family; who having defeated Oſwald, another prince of the

[71] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 23.

blood,

A.D. 600, to 801.

blood, and pretender to the crown, reigned in profound peace to the time of his death A. D. 741 [72]. Ceolwlf king of Northumberland had in the mean time reſigned his crown, and retired into the monaſtery of Lindesfarne, A. D. 737, and was ſucceeded by his couſin Eadbert, the laſt king of the Northumbrians who made any conſiderable figure [73]. He defended the ſouthern frontiers of his kingdom againſt ſome attempts of Ethelbald king of Mercia, with ſpirit and ſucceſs, and reduced the Strath-Cluyd Britons to their former ſubjection [74]. This great prince, after having triumphed over all his enemies, and gained the love and admiration of his ſubjects, was unfortunately ſeized with the epidemic madneſs of thoſe times, reſigned his crown to his ſon Oſulf, and retired into a monaſtery, A. D. 758; where he lived to ſee the ruin which this unwarrantable ſtep brought upon his family and country [75]. Cuthred, who ſucceeded Ethelhard in the throne of Weſſex, had an unquiet reign, being almoſt continually engaged in war, either againſt Ethelbald king of Mercia, or, in conjunction with that prince, againſt the Britons [76]. In the ninth year of his reign, his ſon Cenric, a young prince of great courage, was ſlain in a military tumult. About a year after this great misfortune, he defeated, and generouſly pardoned, Ethelhun, a nobleman of an

[72] Chron. Saxon. p. 53. 55. [73] Sim. Dunelm. c. 16.
[74] Ib. c. 18. Continuatio Bedæ. [75] Sim. Dunelm. c. 18.
[76] W. Malmeſ. l. 1. c. 1. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.

ambitious

ambitious and undaunted ſpirit, who had raiſed a rebellion; and it was not long before he reaped the reward of his generoſity. For his great rival Ethelbald, having collected all his forces, in order to decide their quarrel by one great blow, the two monarchs met, at the head of two great armies, A. D. 752, at Burford, where a long and bloody battle was fought, in which Cuthred obtained the victory, chiefly by the prodigies of valour performed by the grateful Ethelhun. This nobleman, after killing great numbers of the Mercian ſoldiers, encountered Ethelbald, and obliged him to fly, in which he was ſoon followed by his whole army[77]. Cuthred did not very long ſurvive this victory, and another which he obtained over the Britons; but dying A. D. 754, was ſucceeded by his couſin Segebert; who, by his folly, pride, and cruelty, ſoon forfeited the eſteem, and incurred the hatred of his ſubjects; who, A. D. 755, rebelled againſt him, and drove him from his throne and country. The worthleſs and wretched Segebert, being forſaken by all the world, took ſhelter in the great foreſt of Anderida; where he was diſcovered, and put to death, by a ſwine-herd[78]. Cynewlf, a prince of the royal family, who had headed the inſurrection againſt Segebert, ſucceeded him in the throne of Weſſex[79]. About the ſame time, Ethelbald king of Mercia, after

A.D. 600, to 801.

77 Hen. Hunt. l. 4. 78 Id. ibid. Chron. Saxon. p. 56.
79 Id. ibid.

A.D. 600, to 801.

a long reign of forty-one years, was killed in battle at Seckington in Warwickſhire [80]. Beornred, who ſucceeded him, appears to have been an uſurper, and probably commander of the army which defeated and ſlew him. If this was really the caſe, he had no great reaſon to rejoice in the ſucceſs of his ambitious ſchemes; for, before the end of the year 755, he was dethroned, and expelled by a general inſurrection of the nobility and people of Mercia, under the conduct of Offa, a brave young prince of the royal family, who was by univeral conſent raiſed to the throne [81].

Continued.

Offa was by far the greateſt and moſt powerful prince that ever filled the throne of Mercia, and raiſed that kingdom to a degree of greatneſs and proſperity, which ſeemed to threaten all the other kingdoms of the heptarchy with ſubjection. His firſt attempt was againſt the kingdom of Northumberland, from which he diſmembered the county of Nottingham, and annexed it to his own dominions [82]. The kings of Kent had for a conſiderable time been in a ſtate of dependence, ſometimes on the kings of Weſſex, and ſometimes on thoſe of Mercia. Offa invaded that little kingdom A. D. 774; and having obtained a great victory at Otford, reduced it to a ſtate of ſubjection to his authority [83]. Cynewlf, king of Weſſex, obſerving theſe ſucceſſes of his

[80] Chron. Saxon. p. 59. Ingulph. Hiſt. Croy. l. 1.

[81] Id. ibid. W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 4.

[82] Brompton, p. 776.

[83] Id. ibid. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.

moſt

moſt powerful rival with a jealous eye, raiſed a great army with a deſign to obſtruct his progreſs; but was defeated by Offa at Benſington in Oxfordſhire, A. D. 775 [84]. After this victory, Offa enlarged his dominions on that ſide, by the reduction of the counties of Oxford and Glouceſter, which had long made a part of the kingdom of Weſſex. The Britons ſeem to have taken advantage of this war between the two greateſt of the Anglo-Saxon princes, and made incurſions into both their territories; which brought about a peace between them, and the union of their arms againſt their common enemy. The unhappy Britons, unable to reſiſt two ſuch powerful adverſaries, were every where defeated, and obliged to take ſhelter among the mountains of Wales, abandoning all the low countries to the conquerors [85]. To ſecure his acquiſitions on that ſide, Offa commanded a broad and deep ditch to be made from the mouth of the river Wye on the ſouth, to the river Dee in Flintſhire on the north; of which ſome veſtiges are ſtill viſible [86]. Cynewlf, king of Weſſex, after he had reigned twenty-nine years, was ſurprized and ſlain, A. D. 784, by Cyneheard, a pretender to his crown, at Merton in Surry, whither he had gone with a few attendants to pay a private viſit to a lady. But Cyneheard (who was brother to the wicked and unfortunate Segebert) did not reap that

A.D. 600, to 801.

84 Hen. Hunt. l. 4. Chron. Saxon. p. 61.

85 Hen. Hunt. l. 4. Powel's Hiſt. of Wales, p. 19.

86 Id. ibid. Speed's Chron. p. 344.

A.D 600, to 801.

advantage from this atchievement which he expected; for the nobility and people of the country having heard of the ſlaughter of their king, flew to arms, and cut him and all his followers in pieces [87]. Upon this, Brihtric, a prince of the royal family, mounted the throne of Weſſex; though Egbert, deſcended from Ingeld, brother to king Ina, had a preferable title [88].

Hiſtory of Northumberland.

The kingdom of Northumberland, which in the reign of Eadbert had been the largeſt and moſt flouriſhing ſtate in Britain, after the retreat of that prince from the world, became a ſcene of inceſſant broils, and frequent revolutions, which at length ended in total anarchy and confuſion. Oſulf, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Eadbert, was killed by his own domeſtics July 4, A. D. 759; and Ethelwold, the ſon of Moll, a nobleman who ſeems not to have been related to the royal family, advanced to the throne by the favour of the people [89]. Oſwin, a prince of the blood, attempted to pull him down from this elevation, but was defeated and ſlain at Eldem near Melroſs; though Ethelwold was, not long after, A. D. 765, obliged to reſign his crown in favour of Alchred, the ſon of Oſulf; who was in his turn expelled, A. D. 774, by Ethelred, the ſon of Ethelwold [90]. This uſurper did not long enjoy his precarious dignity, being driven out, A. D. 779, by Elfwold, the brother of Alchred [91].

87 Chron. Saxon. p. 57. 63. 88 W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 2. l. 2. c. 1.
89 Sim. Dunelm. c. 19. Chron. Saxon. p. 59.
90 Id. p. 60, 61. 91 Id. p. 62. Chron. de Mailroſ. ad A 778.

The

The juſt title, and many virtues of this prince, could not preſerve him from the fate of his predeceſſors; for he was barbarouſly murdered A. D. 788, by one of his own generals, and ſucceeded by his nephew Oſred, the ſon of Alchred [92]. Oſred had hardly been ſeated one year on this tottering throne, when he was pulled down and thruſt into a monaſtery by the nobility, who recalled Ethelred, who had been expelled about ten years before [93]. Ethelred took every poſſible precaution to preſerve himſelf from a ſecond expulſion. He put to death Eardulf, a powerful nobleman, whoſe deſigns he ſuſpected; and having got the two young princes, Elf and Elfwene, the ſons of the late king Elfwold, into his hands, he murdered them both [94]. Oſred alſo, his predeceſſor, being taken priſoner in an attempt he made to recover his crown, ſhared the ſame fate [95]. Still further to ſecure himſelf againſt all his enemies, he married Elfleda, daughter of Offa, the powerful king of Mercia. A.D. 600, to 801.

But all theſe precautions proved in vain: for he was murdered by his own ſubjects about four years after his reſtoration, A. D. 794 [96]. So long a ſucceſſion of ſudden and ſanguinary revolutions (of which there is hardly a parallel to be found in hiſtory), ſtruck terror into the boldeſt and moſt ambitious hearts, and deterred them from aſpiring to ſuch a dangerous dignity. This

92 Chron. de Mailroſ. ad An. 788. 93 Id. ad An. 789.
94 Id. ibid. 95 Id. ibid. 96 Id. ibid.

A. D. 600, to 801.

occaſioned, if we may believe William of Malmſbury, a total diſſolution of government in Northumberland for more than thirty years; which rendered the people of that country unhappy at home, and odious and contemptible among other nations [97]. "Charles the great (ſays Alcwinus, "in a letter preſerved by Malmſbury) is ſo enraged againſt the people of Northumberland, "that he calls them a perfidious and perverſe "people, the murderers of their own princes, "and worſe than heathens; and if I, who am "a native of that country, had not interceded "for them, he would have done them all the "miſchief in his power [98].

Wicked act of Offa king of Mercia.

Offa king of Mercia, not contented with all the additions which he had made to his dominions by the force of arms, increaſed them ſtill further, by an act of the moſt horrid treachery and cruelty, towards the concluſion of his reign, A. D. 792. Though the kings of the Eaſt-Angles, who had never been powerful, had long been in a ſtate of dependence on the Mercian monarchs; yet they ſtill continued to enjoy the title and many of the prerogatives of royalty. Ethelred, who at this time governed that ſmall ſtate, was a young prince of the moſt amiable perſon and character, beloved by his ſubjects, and eſteemed by all the world. By the advice of his council, he made propoſals of marriage to Althrida, daughter of Offa, which were favourably

[97] W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 3.

[98] Id. ibid.

vourably received, and he was invited to the court of Mercia to conclude the match. When he arrived there, attended by the chief nobility of his kingdom, he was baſely murdered, and his dominions annexed to thoſe of Mercia[99]. Offa did not long ſurvive this inhuman deed, for which he endeavoured to make ſome atonement by an expenſive journey to Rome, and many liberal donations to the church. He died A. D. 794, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Egfrith; who died in leſs than five months after his father[100]. This made room for Kenwlf, a prince of the royal family, who is greatly celebrated by our monkiſh hiſtorians for his valour and religion. He was the laſt of the kings of Mercia who made any conſiderable figure. For after his death, which happened A. D. 819, that kingdom became a ſcene of almoſt annual revolutions, which ſoon brought on its ruin[101]. A. D. 600, to 801.

Brihtric, who became king of Weſſex on the murder of Cynewlf, A. D. 784, being conſcious that his title was diſputable, took every precaution he could think of to ſecure the poſſeſſion of his throne. With this view he married Eadburga, daughter to Offa king of Mercia, who was by far the moſt powerful prince in Britain in thoſe times[102]. With the ſame view, he endeavoured, by various means, to get Egbert, his Hiſtory of Weſſex.

99 Chron. Saxon. p. 65. W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 4.
100 W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 5. 101 Id. ibid.
102 Chron. Saxon. p. 64.

A. D. 600, to 801. dangerous competitor, into his hands; which obliged that young prince to abandon his country, and take ſhelter in the court of Charles the Great; by whom he was kindly received and effectually protected. In the court and armies of that renowned prince, Egbert acquired thoſe accompliſhments which laid the foundation of his future greatneſs, and rendered him the greateſt politician and general of the age in which he lived [103]. Brihtric was very unhappy in his marriage with Eadburga, who was wanton, cruel, and perfidious, and ſtuck at nothing to accompliſh the deſtruction of thoſe who had incurred her diſpleaſure. Amongſt others ſhe had conceived an implacable animoſity againſt a young nobleman (who was a favourite of her huſband), and reſolved upon his death. For this purpoſe, ſhe prepared a cup of poiſon; of which Brihtric having inadvertently taſted, loſt his life, at the ſame time, and by the ſame means, with his favourite, A. D. 800 [104]. Upon this event the nobility of Weſſex recalled Egbert from his exile, and placed him, amidſt the joyful acclamations of the people, on the throne of his anceſtors; which he filled with great dignity thirty-ſix years, and became the firſt monarch of the Engliſh nation, by thoſe ſteps which we ſhall trace in the beginning of the next ſection.—In the mean time it may be proper to bring down

[103] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 1.
[104] R. Hoveden Ann. pars prior.

the

the hiſtory of Wales and North-Britain, from where we left it to this period. A.D. 600, to 801.

Hiſtory of Wales.

The Britons to the ſouth of the Briſtol channel had been in a kind of ſubjection to the Weſt-Saxon kings, from about the beginning of the eighth century, though their own chieftains ſtill retained ſome degree of authority, till they were reduced to the condition of ſubjects by Egbert. Thoſe who lived between the Briſtol channel and the river Dee were expelled from the low countries, by Offa king of Mercia, and confined to the mountains of Wales; where they were governed by ſeveral petty princes, who, according to the cuſtom of thoſe times, were honoured with the title of kings [105]. The moſt conſiderable of theſe princes were Caradoc king of North Wales, and Conan Tendaethwy king of South Wales, who flouriſhed in the eighth century [106]. The Cumbrian and Strathcluyd Britons, who lived along the weſt coaſts, from the river Dee to the frith of Clyde, were in ſubjection to the Northumbrian princes during the flouriſhing ſtate of that kingdom; and upon its decline, they recovered their liberty; which they did not long enjoy, the one half of them being reduced to the ſame ſtate of ſubjection by the Scots and Picts, and the other half by Egbert [107].

Before we leave the ſouth, it may be neceſſary to take notice, that the ſouth and eaſt coaſts of

First appearance of the Danes

105 Powel's Hiſt. Wales, p. 19, 20.

106 Id. ibid.

107 Innes, v. 1. p. 161.

A.D. 600, to 801. Britain began to be infeſted by new and ſtrange enemies towards the end of the eighth century. Theſe were the Norwegian and Daniſh pirates, who made a very diſtinguiſhed figure in the hiſtory of Europe for more than two centuries. The firſt appearance of theſe ferocious and deſtructive rovers was on the coaſt of Weſſex, A. D. 787, where they murdered one of the king's officers, who went amongſt them without fear or ſuſpicion, to enquire who they were, and whence they came [108]. About ſix years after, another crew of theſe pirates (for as yet they deſerved no other name) landed on the coaſt of Northumberland, killed many of the inhabitants, and plundered the famous monaſtery of Lindesfarne, or Holy-Iſland [109]. The very next year, another fleet of theſe rovers appeared upon the ſame coaſts, and plundered the monaſtery of Weremouth; but a ſtorm ariſing, ſeveral of their ſhips were wrecked, many of themſelves drowned, and a conſiderable number of them taken priſoners, and beheaded on the ſhore, by the country-people [110]. This diſaſter deterred them for ſome time from making any attempts upon the Britiſh coaſts.

on the coaſts of Britain.

Hiſtory of Scotland. On the death of Murdoch king of Scots, A. D. 730, his ſon Ewen mounted the throne, and reigned three years, according to the two moſt ancient catalogues of the kings of Scotland [111]. But our later hiſtorians change the

[108] Chron. Saxon. p. 64, Hen. Hunt. l. 4. [109] Id. ibid.
[110] Id. ibid. [111] Innes, Append. N° 4, 5.

order

order of ſucceſſion, and introduce Ethfine, or Eth the White, immediately after Murdoch. They differ too from the catalogues concerning the father of Ethfine, who, according to them, was Heatagan, or Eugene VI. who died A. D. 715; but, according to the catalogues, Eochol Crooked-noſe, or Eugene IV. who died A. D. 687 [112]. But in whatever order theſe two princes reigned, we know very little with certainty of their tranſactions. Fergus, the ſon of Ethfine, mounted the throne of Scotland A. D. 763; but being a profligate and libidinous prince, he was murdered by his queen, in a fit of jealouſy, in the third year of his reign [113]. Oengus king of the Picts, who reigned over that nation from A. D. 730 to A. D. 761, is repreſented, by the anonymous continuator of Bede's hiſtory, to have been a cruel and ſanguinary tyrant, from the beginning to the end of his reign [114]. Selvac, the ſon of Ewen, ſucceeded Fergus II. in the throne of Scotland A. D. 766. What credit is due to the ſtory told by Boethius and Buchanan, concerning a rebellion raiſed againſt this prince by one Donald Bane, who, aſſuming the title of *King of the Iſles*, invaded the continent of Scotland, where he was defeated and ſlain, it is difficult to determine [115]. Selvac dying A. D. 787, was ſucceeded by Eochol, the ſon of Ethfine, who is named *Achaius* by the later

A D 609, to 801.

[112] Innes, Append. No 4, 5. Fordun, l. 3. c. 46.
[113] Fordun, l. 3. c. 46. [114] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. p. 224.
[115] Boet. l. 9. Buchan. l. 5.

A.D. 600, to 801.

later Scotch hiſtorians. From the fall of the Roman empire to this period, the Britiſh princes ſeem to have had little or no connection or intercourſe with thoſe on the continent. But Charlemagne king of France having, by his great policy and many victories, revived the Weſtern empire, began to form alliances with foreign princes, and particularly with ſome of the Britiſh kings. That this illuſtrious prince kept up a friendly correſpondence, and entered into a treaty of alliance and commerce, with Offa king of Mercia, we have the moſt undoubted evidence [116]. It is alſo certain, that there ſubſiſted a friendly intercourſe, by letters and meſſengers, between that great prince and the kings of Scots his cotemporaries; but whether that intercourſe amounted to a formal alliance, as ſome French and Scotch hiſtorians have affirmed [117], may be juſtly doubted. Achaius married Ferguſiana, ſiſter to Hungus king of the Picts; by whom he had a ſon, named *Alpine*, who became heir to the Pictiſh crown, on the failure of the male line of that royal family [118]. Though Achaius ſurvived the period of this ſection, it may not be improper to mention his death, which happened in the thirty-ſecond year of his reign, A. D. 819.

[116] W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 4.

[117] See Fordun. l. 3. c. 48. Buchan. l. 5. Mezray Hiſt. Franc. l. 9. p. 412. Eginhard Vit. Car. Mag. l. 16. p. 79.

[118] Boet. l. 10.

Though

Though the Pictiſh monarchy appears to have been in a flouriſhing ſtate in the latter part of the eighth century, the particulars of its hiſtory which have been preſerved are ſo few, that they cannot be formed into any thing like a continued narration. A.D. 600, to 801.

SECTION III.

The civil and military hiſtory of Great Britain, from the acceſſion of Egbert, the firſt monarch of England, A. D. 801, *to the acceſſion of Edward the Elder*, A. D. 901.

THOUGH Brihtric king of Weſſex died A. D. 800, it was not till the year after that his ſucceſſor Egbert arrived from the continent, and took poſſeſſion of the vacant throne. At that period all the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy were in a dependent or unſettled ſtate. The little kingdom of Suſſex had been ſome time before annexed to Weſſex, and that of the Eaſt-Angles to Mercia; and the petty kings of Kent and Eſſex were tributaries to the Mercian monarchs. The two remaining kingdoms of Mercia and Northumberland, though naturally powerful, were greatly weakened by the unſettled ſtate of their government, and conteſts about the ſucceſſion. Theſe circumſtances afforded Egbert, who was a wiſe and valiant prince, at the head A.D. 801, to 901.

State of England at the acceſſion of Egbert, and the conqueſts of that prince.

A. D. 801, to 901.

head of an united people a very fair proſpect of enlarging his dominions, and extending his authority. This prince, however, ſpent the firſt years of his reign in gaining the affections, by promoting the proſperity of his ſubjects, and in reducing the Britiſh chieftains of Devon and Cornwall to an entire ſubjection to his government[1]. Nor was he at laſt the aggreſſor in thoſe wars which terminated in the reduction of all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy to his obedience. For Bernulf, who had uſurped the throne of Mercia, envying his proſperity, and dreading his power, invaded Weſſex with all his forces, A. D. 823. Egbert meeting this bold invader at Ellundun (now Wilton), defeated him with ſuch prodigious ſlaughter, that the river is ſaid to have been diſcoloured with the blood, and choked up with the carcaſes of the Mercians who fell in that battle[2]. This victory was ſo deciſive, that Egbert met with little further oppoſition in the conqueſt of Mercia and its dependencies. The two tributary kingdoms of Kent and Eſſex ſubmitted, without much reſiſtance, to his ſon Ethelwolf, who marched into thoſe parts at the head of a detachment; and the Eaſt Angles, throwing off the Mercian yoke, which they had borne for ſome time with great impatience, put themſelves under the protection of Egbert. This revolt of the Eaſt-Angles completed the ruin of the Mercian affairs, as both

[1] Chron. Saxon. p. 69.

[2] Id. p. 70. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.

Bernulf,

Bernulf, and his ſucceſſor Ludecan, kings of Mercia, loſt their lives in attempting to reduce them [3]. Wiglaf, who ſucceeded Ludecan, was ſoon obliged to abandon his throne, and conceal himſelf in a cell at Croyland abbey, to prevent his falling into the hands of the conqueror [4]. Upon the retreat of this prince, all oppoſition ceaſed, and Egbert beheld himſelf ſole monarch of all England to the ſouth of the Humber, about four years after the commencement of the war. A.D. 801, to 901.

Though this ſurpriſing ſucceſs probably exceeded the expectations, it did not ſatisfy the ambition of Egbert, who paſſed the Humber with his army, in order to add the kingdom of Northumberland to his other conqueſts. This kingdom was at that time in ſuch an unſettled and diſtracted ſtate, that it was in no condition to reſiſt ſo powerful an invader; and therefore its chief nobility met him at Dore in Yorkſhire, made their ſubmiſſion, and acknowledged him for their ſovereign [5]. Thus was the reduction of all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy under one monarch completed A.D. 827, about three hundred and ſeventy-eight years after the firſt arrival of the Saxons in this iſland [6]. Eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh monarchy.

Egbert poſſeſſed the art of ſecuring, as well as of making, conqueſts. That he might not too Wiglaf king of Mercia re-

3 Hen. Hunt. l. 4. 4 Ingulf. Hiſt.
5 Chron. Saxon. p. 71.
6 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 1. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.

much

A. D. 801, to 901. ſtored, and made tributary by Egbert.

much exaſperate the Mercians, who were a numerous and powerful people, by taking from them at once every ſhadow of their former independency, he reſtored their late ſovereign Wiglaf to the title of king; but obliged him to pay tribute, and hold his kingdom of him as his ſuperior lord[7]. This moderation ſeems to have been very pleaſing, both to the Mercians and their prince, as we hear of no attempts they made to ſhake off a yoke which was made ſo eaſy.

Egbert's wars with the Welſh and Danes.

Egbert, obſerving his own hereditary kingdom, and all his late acquiſitions, in a ſtate of tranquillity, began to think of new conqueſts. With this view, he marched his army into North-Wales, over-ran the whole country as far as Snowdon, and would probably have added it to his other dominions, if he had not been called away to encounter more formidable enemies[8]. Theſe were the Danes; who, after a receſs of more than forty years, began again to infeſt the coaſts of Britain, A. D. 832, when they plundered the iſle of Shepey. The very next year they returned, with no fewer than thirty-five ſhips, and landed at Charmouth in Dorſetſhire; near to which place a battle was fought between them and the Engliſh, with great ſlaughter on both ſides, but without much reaſon to boaſt of victory on either[9]. About

[7] Chron. Saxon. p. 72. Ingulf. Hiſt.
[8] Chron. Saxon. p. 72. Hen. Hunt. l. 4.
[9] Id. ibid.

two

two years after, theſe teaſing plunderers came again with a ſtill greater fleet and army; and landing in Cornwall, prevailed upon the Britons of that country to revolt, and join them. Egbert, not diſmayed at this junction, engaged and defeated the combined army of the Danes and Britons, at Hengſdown-hill, with prodigious ſlaughter. This was the laſt glorious action of the life of that great prince, and firſt Engliſh monarch, who died A. D. 836 [10].

A.D. 801, to 901.

Egbert was ſucceeded by his ſon Ethelwolf; who, in the very firſt year of his reign, gave the government of Kent, Suſſex, and Eſſex, to his eldeſt ſon Athelſtan, with the title of king [11]. The unwelcome viſits of the Danes now became annual, or even more frequent; and the hiſtory of England for ſeveral years conſiſts of nothing but dry details of the deſcents of theſe deſtructive rovers on different parts of the coaſts, and of their battles with the inhabitants. The moſt conſiderable of theſe battles was that which was fought at Okeley in Surrey, A. D. 851, between Ethelwolf, aſſiſted by his ſon Ethelbald, and a great army of Danes, who had landed from a fleet of 350 ſail, at the mouth of the river Thames, and had taken and plundered the cities of Canterbury and London in their march. In this action, which is ſaid to have been the bloodieſt that ever had been fought in England,

Acceſſion and wars of Ethelwolf.

[10] Chron. Saxon. p. 73. [11] Id. ibid.

A.D. 801, to 901.

the Engliſh obtained a great victory [12]. But notwithſtanding this, and two other victories which they obtained that ſame year, one by land at Wanbury in Dorſetſhire, the other by ſea near Sandwich, a party of Danes took poſſeſſion of the iſle of Thanet, where they continued ſeveral years, which was the firſt attempt they made to ſettle in England [13]. The people of North Wales, obſerving how much the Engliſh were haraſſed by the frequent depredations of the Danes, and imagining that this was a favourable opportunity for revenging the injuries which they had received from Egbert, invaded Mercia, A. D. 853, with a very numerous army; which obliged Burthred, the tributary king of that country, to implore the aſſiſtance of Ethelwolf, who was his father-in-law, as well as his ſovereign lord. Upon this Ethelwolf marched an army into Mercia, expelled the Welſh, and purſued them into their own country [14].

Ethelwolf's journey to Rome, return, and death.

This was the laſt military exploit of Ethelwolf; who, the year after, took a journey to Rome, where he ſpent about ten months in the ſuperſtitious devotions of thoſe times, and in acts of liberality to the Pope and clergy; which made him a very welcome gueſt, and procured him all the frivolous unexpenſive honours his heart could wiſh; and amongſt others the papal unction of his youngeſt ſon Alfred, who was

[12] Hen. Hunt. l. 5. [13] Id. ibid. Chron. Saxon. p. 76.
[14] Id. ibid.

with

with him in that city[15]. In his return to England, through France, he married the princeſs Judith, daughter to Charles the Bald. On his arrival in his own dominions, he met with a very unexpected difficulty. His eldeſt ſurviving ſon Ethelbald, having his impatient ambition encouraged by ſome evil counſellors, had reſolved to prevent his father's reſuming the reins of government, and had formed a very powerful party to aſſiſt him in executing that reſolution. But this unnatural quarrel was happily terminated without blood, by the moderation of Ethelwolf, who conſented that his ſon ſhould retain the kingdom of Weſſex, and contented himſelf with his other dominions for the remainder of his life, which was only two years[16]. A.D. 801, to 901.

Ethelwolf, at his death, A. D. 857, left four ſons, named *Ethelbald*, *Ethelbert*, *Ethered*, and *Alfred*. By his will he divided his dominions between the two eldeſt, aſſigning the weſtern parts, as moſt honourable, to Ethelbald, and the eaſtern to Ethelbert[17]. The firſt of theſe was a very profligate prince, and gave great ſcandal by marrying his father's widow[18]. At his death, which happened A. D. 860, his brother Ethelbert ſucceeded to his dominions, and thereby became the ſovereign of all England. His reign was alſo ſhort; and during the courſe of it the coaſts were inceſſantly infeſted by the The wars of Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethered.

15 Aſſerius Vit. Alfredi, p. 2.
16 Id. ibid. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 2.
17 Aſſerius, p. 2.
18 Id. ibid.

A.D. 801, to 901.

Danes. He was ſucceeded, A. D. 866, by his next brother Ethered; who, though a good prince, and aſſiſted by his heroic brother Alfred, hardly enjoyed one moment's tranquillity during his whole reign. The Danes, no longer contented with making deſultory deſcents upon the coaſts, came over in greater multitudes, under more honourable leaders, penetrated further into the country, and attempted to make conqueſts. A great army of theſe adventurers landed A. D. 866, among the Eaſt-Angles; who, to preſerve themſelves from immediate deſtruction, gave them winter-quarters, and furniſhed them with a great number of horſes in the ſpring [19]. Thus provided, they directed their march northward, paſſed the Humber, and took the city of York. The Northumbrians at this time were engaged in a civil war, between two competitors for the government, Oſbright and Ælla, who had the wiſdom to ſuſpend their hoſtilities, and unite their forces againſt the common enemy; but were both killed in an attempt to recover York [20]. Next year the Daniſh army leaving York, penetrated into Mercia, and ſeized Nottingham, where they wintered. Burthred, the tributary king of Mercia, unable to expel theſe invaders, implored the aſſiſtance of Ethered; who marching, with his brother Alfred, at the head of a great army, inveſted the Danes in Nottingham, and partly by force, and partly

[19] Chron. Saxon. p. 78.

[20] Id. ibid. Aſſer. p. 5.

by

by treaty, obliged them to evacuate that place, and return into the north[21]. Having reſted almoſt a whole year at York, they again left that city A. D. 870, marched through part of Mercia, marking their way with blood and ruin, entered the country of the Eaſt-Angles, and took up their winter-quarters at Thetford[22]. The Eaſt-Angles, finding that all their former ſubmiſſions could not preſerve them from ruin, flew to arms, and being commanded by Edmund, a young prince of diſtinguiſhed piety and virtue, attacked the Danes; but were totally defeated, and their prince taken and put to death[23]. The Danes, encouraged by theſe ſucceſſes, advanced to Reading, which they fortified, and made their head-quarters; and threatened the whole country around with deſtruction. Ethered, in order to deliver his kingdom from thoſe dreadful enemies, who had ſo long preyed upon its vitals, collected all his forces, and ſummoned the Mercians and Northumbrians to join him with theirs. But theſe infatuated nations, taking advantage of his diſtreſs to recover their independency, refuſed to comply with this ſummons; by which they weakened the hands of the ſovereign, and brought ruin upon themſelves[24]. Not diſpirited with this moſt unſeaſonable defection, Ethered marched, at the head of his native ſubjects, to diſlodge the Danes; A. D. 801, to 901.

[21] Aſſer. p. 5. [22] Id. p. 6. [23] Id. ibid.
[24] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 3.

A.D. 801, to 901.

and in the courſe of one year (871) engaged them in five pitched battles, with various ſucceſs. Being mortally wounded in the laſt of theſe battles, this virtuous but unhappy prince ſoon after ended his life and reign, leaving his ſubjects and ſucceſſor in the moſt dangerous and diſtreſsful circumſtances[25].

Acceſſion of Alfred, and his firſt wars with the Danes.

Alfred, the youngeſt and only ſurviving ſon of Ethelwolf, ſucceeded his brother Ethered A. D. 871, in the twenty-ſecond year of his age. This excellent prince, who is juſtly called the Great, and hath been long eſteemed the pride and glory of the Engliſh nation, began his reign under the greateſt diſadvantages. Many of his cities, towns, and villages, were reduced to aſhes, his beſt provinces almoſt depopulated, his braveſt captains and ſoldiers ſlain in battle, and a powerful army of cruel exulting barbarians, the authors of all theſe calamities, in the very bowels of his country. He was even unſucceſsful in his firſt efforts to deliver his ſubjects from their enemies, being defeated at the battle of Wilton, which was fought within a month after his acceſſion. The Danes, however, having loſt one of their kings, nine of their generals, and prodigious numbers of their men in their late battles, and being no ſtrangers to the courage and conduct of the youthful monarch who oppoſed them, conſented to a peace, and agreed to retire out of the Weſt-Saxon terri-

[25] Aſſer. p. 7.

tories.

tories[26]. In conſequence of this agreement, they evacuated Reading, and retired to London, where they ſpent the winter[27]. Burthred, brother-in-law to Alfred, who then governed Mercia, unable to diſlodge theſe troubleſome inmates by force, prevailed upon them by many valuable preſents, to leave his country; from whence they marched into the kingdom of the Eaſt-Angles, and fixed their head-quarters for ſome time at Torkſey. Having deſtroyed every thing in theſe parts, they returned A. D. 874, into Mercia, of which they made an entire conqueſt, obliging Burthred to abandon his country in deſpair, and retire to Rome, where he ſoon after died[28]. This Daniſh army, which had continued eight years in England, and had traverſed and almoſt ruined the whole country to the north of the Thames and Severn, was now become ſo numerous, by continual acceſſions of new adventurers, that it was found inconvenient to remain any longer in one body. It divided therefore at Repton in Derbyſhire: one half marching northward under the command of a prince named *Haldane*, took poſſeſſion of the kingdom of Northumberland, and there began to ſettle and apply to agriculture A. D. 875; the other half marching ſouthward under the command of Guthrum, Oſcitil, and Amund, three chieftains who had lately arrived with many followers, took up their head-quarters at Cam- A.D. 801, to 901.

[26] Chron. Saxon. p. 82. Aſſer. p. 8. [27] Id. ibid.
[28] Id. ibid.

A.D. 801, to 901.

bridge[29]. Before the Danes left Mercia, they delegated the command of that country to one Ceolwulf, a weak and diſloyal nobleman, who had abandoned the ſervice of Alfred, and joined the enemies of his country[30]. This was the melancholy poſture of affairs in England in the beginning of the year 876.

Continuation of his wars.

That part of the Daniſh army which had wintered at Cambridge, marching from thence in the night, entered the kingdom of Weſſex, and penetrated as far as Wareham in Dorſetſhire, which they ſurpriſed[31]. Alfred, rouſed by this invaſion from the ſhort repoſe which he had enjoyed ſince the laſt peace with the Danes, and finding himſelf unprepared to meet them in the field, entered into a negociation with them, which ended in a treaty, by which they engaged, and confirmed their engagement by the moſt ſolemn oaths, to retire a ſecond time out of the territories of the Weſt Saxons[32]. But theſe faithleſs barbarians violated this treaty almoſt as ſoon as it was made, by ſurpriſing the city of Exeter, with their cavalry, to which their whole army marched A. D. 877[33]. They met, however, with a very great loſs this year by ſea. Being overtaken by a dreadful ſtorm near Swanwiç, as they were bringing their fleet from Wareham to Exeter, no fewer than 120 of their ſhips were wrecked[34]. Alfred being now fully convinced,

29 Chron. Saxon. p. 82, 83. Aſſer. p. 8.
30 Id. ibid.
31 Id. ibid.
32 Chron. Saxon. p. 83. Aſſer. p. 8.
33 Id. ibid.
34 Id. ibid.

that

that nothing could preſerve his country from being conquered, but a brave reſiſtance, collected all his forces, with which he inveſted Exeter by land, while a fleet which he had prepared, and manned chiefly with Friſian pirates, blocked up the harbour. This fleet having happily defeated a Daniſh ſquadron, which brought a reinforcement to the beſieged, the Danes in Exeter capitulated and agreed to evacuate that city, and all the territories of the Weſt-Saxons; which they accordingly did in Auguſt this year, and retired into Mercia, where they ſpent the winter [35]. While they remained in Mercia, they received a great reinforcement of their countrymen; which emboldened them to return once more into the kingdom of Weſſex; and having ſeized Chippenham, which was then a royal city, they over-run the whole country, A. D. 878 [36]. A.D. 801, to 901.

The Weſt-Saxons, who, animated by the example and exhortations of their king, had made ſo noble a ſtand in defence of their country, after all the reſt of England had ſubmitted, were now at laſt diſpirited, thinking it in vain any longer to oppoſe enemies who were neither bound by treaties nor diminiſhed by defeats. Some of them fled into foreign countries, ſome ſubmitted to the conquerors, and ſome concealed themſelves in woods and foreſts; while the brave Alfred was abandoned by all but a few faithful Alfred's retirement.

[35] Aſſer. p. 9. Chron. Saxon. p. 84.

[36] Id. ibid.

friends,

A. D. 801, to 901. friends, and his own invincible reſolution [37]. At length finding it unſafe to retain even theſe few followers about his perſon, he diſmiſſed them, to wait for better times; and putting on the dreſs of a country-clown, concealed himſelf in the cottage of a cow-herd [38]. As every circumſtance relating to ſo great a perſon in ſuch deep diſtreſs appears important and intereſting, the following anecdote hath been preſerved by ſeveral of our ancient hiſtorians; and particularly by Aſſer, who probably heard it from the king's own mouth: That one day, when he was ſetting by the fire in the cottage, where he had concealed himſelf, trimming his bow and arrows, he was heartily ſcolded by the good woman of the houſe (who knew not the quality of her gueſt) for neglecting to turn ſome cakes that were toaſting; telling him in great anger, that he would be active enough in eating them, though he would not take the trouble to turn them [39].——Alfred did not continue long in this ignoble diſguiſe; but as ſoon as the heat of the ſearch after him was a little abated, he began to look abroad; and finding a place convenient for his purpoſe at the confluence of the Thone and Parett in Somerſetſhire, he collected a few of the braveſt of his nobility, and there built a ſmall fort for their reſidence and protection. In this place, which he named *Ethelingey*, or, *the Iſle of Nobles*, he continued about four months, diſtreſſing his

[37] Chron. Saxon. p. 84. Aſſer. p. 9. [38] Id. ibid.
[39] Id. ibid.

enemies,

enemies, and procuring ſubſiſtence for himſelf and followers by frequent excurſions [40]. A.D. 801, to 901.

While Alfred was thus employed, he received intelligence, that Oddune earl of Devonſhire had defeated a party of the Danes, killed their leader, and taken their magical ſtandard called *Reufan*, or, *The Raven* [41]. Encouraged by this news of the returning ſpirit and ſucceſs of his ſubjects, he reſolved to leave his retreat, and make a vigorous effort for the recovery of his crown. But before he aſſembled his forces, he reſolved to gain an exact knowledge of the ſtrength and poſture of his enemies. With this view, he entered their camp in the diſguiſe of a harper, and diverted them ſo much with his muſic and pleaſantries, that they kept him ſeveral days in their army, introduced him to their general Cuthrum, and gave him an opportunity of ſeeing every thing he deſired [42]. Obſerving with pleaſure, that the Danes were entirely off their guard, he diſpatched truſty meſſengers to all the nobility of Somerſetſhire, Wiltſhire, and Hampſhire, commanding them to meet him, with all their followers, on a certain day, at Brixton near Selwood foreſt. Theſe commands were ſo well obeyed, that Alfred, at the time and place appointed, beheld himſelf at the head of a numerous army of his ſubjects, tranſported with joy at the ſight of their beloved king, and determined to die or conquer under his conduct. That he might not give

Alfred leaves his retirement, and defeats the Danes.

[40] Aſſer. p. 9. [41] Id. p. 10. Alurid. Beverlun. l. 7. p. 105.
[42] Ingulf. Hiſt. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 4.

A. D. 801, to 901.

their ardour time to cool, he led them directly towards Eddington, where their enemies were incamped. The Danes were ſurpriſed beyond meaſure at the approach of an Engliſh army, with king Alfred at their head; and he, falling upon them with great fury before they had time to recover from their ſurpriſe, gained a complete victory [43]. The ſhattered remains of the Daniſh army, with their commander Guthrum, took ſhelter in an old caſtle near the field of battle, where they were immediately inveſted by their victorious enemies, who ſoon compelled them to ſurrender at diſcretion [44]. On this occaſion Alfred acquired as much honour by his clemency as he had done by his valour. Inſtead of glutting his revenge with the blood of theſe proſtrate wretches, he formed the benevolent deſign of making them uſeful and happy. In order to this, he propoſed the following terms: That if they would become Chriſtians, and join with him to prevent the ravages of other Danes, he would ſpare their lives, take them under his protection, and aſſign them ſufficient territories for their reſidence. Theſe conditions were joyfully accepted by Guthrum and his followers, who were baptized and ſettled in Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland, A. D. 880 [45].

Continuation of the wars between Alfred and the Danes.

From this period Alfred and his ſubjects enjoyed ſome repoſe for ſeveral years; which that excellent prince employed in repairing his ruined

43 Chron. Saxon. p. 85. Aſſer. p. 10

44 Id. ibid.

45 Chron. Saxon. p. 85, 86. Aſſer. p. 11.

cities,

cities, building forts in the moſt convenient ſituations for the protection of the coaſts, increaſing his fleet, training his ſubjects to the uſe of arms, and in the execution of many other projects for the ſecurity and improvement of his country[46]. But this repoſe, which had ſeveral times been a little diſturbed by tranſient deſcents, was at laſt deſtroyed by a very formidable invaſion. For the Danes, having all this time been making ſuch deplorable devaſtations in all the provinces of France, that they had reduced themſelves, as well as their enemies, to great diſtreſs and want, reſolved once more to try their fortunes in England, where they arrived A. D. 893, in a fleet of 330 ſhips, under their famous leader Haſtings[47]. The far greateſt part of this mighty armament, diſembarked in the ſouth-eaſt corner of Kent, and ſeizing the fort of Apuldore, made it their head-quarters; while eighty ſail, under their chief commander Haſtings, entered the Thames, and landed their men at Milton; where they erected a ſtrong fortification, of which ſome veſtiges are ſtill remaining[48]. Alfred was in Eaſt-Anglia, regulating the affairs of that country and of Northumberland, when he received the news of this formidable invaſion; and before he left theſe parts, he exacted a new oath of allegiance, and a greater number of hoſtages from the Danes ſettled in theſe two kingdoms[49]. He then directed his march ſouth- A. D. 801, to 901.

46 Aſſer. p. 12.
47 Chron. Saxon. p. 90.
48 Id. p. 92.
49 Id. ibid.

wards,

A. D. 801, to 901. wards, collecting his forces as he advanced, and incamped near the centre of Kent, and in the middle between the two Daniſh armies, in order to prevent their junction, and check their excurſions. In this poſture the three armies remained during the greateſt part of the year 894; in which innumerable ſkirmiſhes happened, between the plundering detachments of the Danes, and parties of the king's army ſent out to protect the country [50]. At length the great Daniſh army at Apuldore, having collected a conſiderable booty, abandoned the fortifications at that place, with a deſign to paſs the Thames, and penetrate into Eſſex; but were intercepted by the king on their march, and defeated, near Farnham [51]. About the ſame time, Haſtings, with the army under his command, removed from Milton, and incamped at Beamſlete, which he fortified, and where he was afterwards joined by the remains of the other army which had eſcaped from Farnham. When Alfred was preparing to attack the Danes at Beamſlete, he received the diſagreeable news, that thoſe of Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland, forgetting all their oaths and obligations, had revolted, and were beſieging Exeter. Leaving, therefore, ſome troops in London, to protect that city againſt the Danes in Eſſex, he marched with great expedition into the weſt, and came upon the Danes before Exeter ſo unexpectedly, that they raiſed the ſiege with

50 Chron. Saxon. p. 92. 51 Id. ibid.

great

great precipitation, and fled to their ſhips [52]. In the mean time, the Danes at Beamflete, encouraged by the diſtance of the king, marched out on a plundering expedition; leaving their wives, children, and booty, in their camp, under a ſtrong guard. The Engliſh troops in London having received intelligence of this, and being joined by a party of the citizens, they marched out with great ſecrecy, attacked the Daniſh camp, cut the guard in pieces, and got poſſeſſion of much ſpoil and many priſoners [53]. Among theſe priſoners were the wife and two ſons of Haſtings, the Daniſh king or general [54]. Alfred, as he had done on former occaſions, made a wiſe and moderate uſe of this great advantage. He reſtored to Haſtings his wife and children, on condition of his leaving the kingdom with his followers; which greatly weakened the power of the Danes in England [55]. Thoſe who remained behind, roamed up and down the country about two years, ſometimes united, and ſometimes in ſeparate bodies, inflicting and ſuffering many evils. At length their numbers being greatly diminiſhed, by frequent ſkirmiſhes, and by a dreadful plague which raged in thoſe times, they embarked at different ports of Northumberland, A. D. 897, and returned to the continent [56]. A.D. 801, to 901.

From this time Alfred reigned in great honour and felicity, the dread of his enemies, the dar- Death of Alfred.

52 Chron. Saxon. p. 92.
53 Id. ibid.
54 Id. ibid.
55 M. Weſt. p. 179.
56 Chron. Saxon. p. 96, 97.

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A.D. 801, to 901.

ling of his ſubjects, and the delight of mankind; inceſſantly employed in ſtrengthening, enriching, adorning his dominions, and in ſecuring them againſt the return of their enemies, by a powerful fleet. But this happy period was not of long duration: for this excellent prince was carried off by death October 28, A. D. 901, in the fifty-third year of his age, and thirtieth of his reign [57].

HAVING thus deduced the civil and military hiſtory of England, from the beginning of the ninth to the beginning of the tenth century, it may be proper to pauſe a little here, in order to take a ſhort view of the ſimilar tranſactions of the other Britiſh nations in the ſame period.

Hiſtory of Wales.

The Engliſh, during the greateſt part of the ninth century, were ſo much engaged in defending themſelves againſt the frequent invaſions and depredations of the Danes, that they gave but little diſturbance to their ancient enemies the Britons; and theſe laſt were ſtill ſo much divided, and ſo often involved in civil wars, that they could not take advantage of the diſtreſſes of the Engliſh. Conon Tindaethy, who for more than half a century had been the moſt powerful prince in Wales, dying A. D. 817, was ſucceeded by Eſylht, his only daughter, and her huſband Mervyn Vrych; in whoſe time happened the two expeditions of the Engliſh into Wales, which

[57] Chron. Saxon. p. 99.

have

have been already mentioned. In the laſt of theſe expeditions, Mervin was ſlain in battle by the Mercians; A. D. 841, and ſucceeded by his ſon Roderic Mawr, or Roderic the Great[58]. This prince inherited North Wales from his mother, Powis from his father, and obtained the government of South Wales by his marriage with the heireſs of that country; on which account he got the pompous name of *Roderic the Great*. On his death, A. D. 877, his dominions were again divided between his three eldeſt ſons, Anarawd, Cadelh, and Mervyn; of which the firſt got North Wales, the ſecond South Wales, and the third Powis[59]. This diviſion, as uſual, occaſioned very pernicious and laſting diſputes between theſe princes and their poſterity. A. D. 801, to 901.

The hiſtory of North Britain begins to be a little better known, and more important, in the ninth century, than in any former period. This is chiefly owing to the union of the Scotch and Pictiſh kingdoms into one monarchy, which happened in the courſe of that century. It is, however, a little uncertain who was the immediate ſucceſſor of Eochal or Achaius king of Scots, who died A. D. 819. According to the two ancient catalogues publiſhed by Father Innes, he was ſucceeded by a prince named *Dungal*, who, in one of theſe catalogues, is called the ſon of Eochal, and in the other the ſon of Selvach[60]. But Fordun, and all the modern Hiſtory of the Scots and Picts.

[58] Powel Hiſt. Wales, p. 18. [59] Id. p. 35.
[60] Innes's Eſſays, Append. N° 4, 5.

A. D. 801, to 901. Scotch hiſtorians, have inſerted a king named *Conval* (concerning whom they do not pretend to know any thing), between Eochal and Dunegal [61]. This Conval, however, ſeems to have been a creature of Fordun's imagination, invented to fill up a blank ſpace, and increaſe the number of kings. Upon the whole, it is moſt probable, that Eochal was ſucceeded by Dunegal. To embelliſh the annals of this prince's reign, ſeveral of the moſt modern hiſtorians have related a very improbable tale, of a rebellion which was raiſed againſt him by prince Alpine, the ſon of Eochal, ſore againſt his inclination, being compelled to it by ſome factious noblemen, who had conſpired to raiſe him, though reluctant, to the throne [62]. Fordun ſays not one word of this ſtrange rebellion. What the ſame authors relate concerning a war carried on by Dunegal againſt the Picts, in favour of his competitor Alpine, is no leſs improbable. All that we know, with any certainty, concerning this prince, is, that he died A. D. 831, and was ſucceeded by Alpine the ſon of Eochal [63]. Soon after the acceſſion of this prince, the male line of the Pictiſh royal family becoming extinct, he laid claim to that crown, as being the ſon of Ferguſiana, only ſiſter to Hungus late king of Picts, and conſequently neareſt heir by the female line [64]. Though this claim was evidently well founded, it was rejected by the Picts; who, in order to preſerve

61 Fordun, l. 3. c. 53.
62 Boeth. l. 10. Buchan. l. 5.
63 Fordun, l. 5. c. 2.
64 Boeth. l. 10. Buchan. l. 5.

them-

themſelves from falling under the dominion of their ancient enemies, raiſed one Feredeth, a nobleman of their own nation, to the throne. Alpine, at the head of a powerful army of his own ſubjects, marched into Pictavia, to aſſert his right; and was met by the Pictiſh army, near the village of Reſtennot in Angus, where a bloody battle was fought; in which the Picts were defeated and their king ſlain [65]. Brude, the eldeſt ſon of Feredeth, ſucceeded his father; but was ſoon after murdered by his own ſubjects; and his brother and ſucceſſor, Kenneth, ſhared the ſame fate in leſs than a year. The Picts then made choice of a nobleman named *Brude* to be their king, who revived their ſpirits, and retrieved their affairs, by his conduct and valour. He firſt fell upon the ſtraggling parties of the Scots, who were plundering the country, and by defeating them, reſtored the hopes and courage of his ſubjects. After ſpending ſome time in this irregular kind of war, he collected his whole forces, in order to determine this quarrel by a deciſive action. The two armies met near Dundee, and immediately engaged with the greateſt fury, their hereditary hatred being inflamed by many recent injuries. The battle was very bloody, and victory remained long doubtful; but at length the Scots being thrown into diſorder by the appearance of ſome troops in their rear, fled on all ſides, and were purſued A. D. 801, to 901.

[65] Buchan. l. 5.

A. D. 801, to 901.

with great ſlaughter. King Alpine was taken priſoner in the purſuit, beheaded in cold blood at a place called *Pittalpy;* and his head, after being carried through the army on a pole, was ſet up on the walls of Abernethy, the capital city of the Picts[66]. This unhappy prince, if we may believe the moſt ancient Scotch hiſtorian, was very brave, but exceedingly raſh and headſtrong, to which he owed his ruin[67].

Continuation of the hiſtory of the Scots and Picts.

The Scots were ſo much diſpirited by this great defeat, that Kenneth the ſon of Alpine, who ſucceeded his father A. D. 834, could not prevail upon them for ſome time to renew the war, and aſſiſt him in proſecuting his claim to the Pictiſh crown. On the other hand, the Picts were prevented from improving the advantage which they had gained, by a violent diſſenſion which broke out in their army. Theſe circumſtances occaſioned a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities between the two nations, which continued about two years. At length Kenneth, impatient of this delay, called an aſſembly of all the nobility of his kingdom, and endeavoured, by many arguments, to perſuade them to an immediate declaration of war. But all his arguments were ineffectual; and they ſtill inſiſted that ſome longer time was neceſſary to recruit their ſtrength and ſpirits, which had been ſo much weakened by their late defeat. The king, unwilling to relinquiſh his deſign, invited the whole aſſembly

[66] Buchan. l. 5. [67] Fordun, l. 5. c. 2.

to an entertainment, which he prolonged till midnight, and then perſuaded them to go to reſt in his great hall, according to the manners of thoſe times. When the whole company were compoſed to reſt, a perſon, inſtructed and prepared by Kenneth, entered the apartment, clothed in the ſkins of dried fiſh, which ſhone in the dark, and, ſpeaking through a trumpet, commanded them to obey their king by declaring war againſt the Picts, and in the name of God promiſed them ſucceſs and victory. Rouſed from their ſleep by theſe tremendous ſounds, and aſtoniſhed at the ſhining figure which they beheld, they haſtened to acquaint the king with the heavenly admonition, and expreſſed the greateſt ardour for the war[68]. The report of this wonderful apparition flew like lightning over the whole kingdom, and excited ſuch impatient keenneſs for war in every boſom, that Kenneth ſoon beheld himſelf at the head of a numerous army of his ſubjects, importuning him to lead them againſt the enemy to fulfil the will of heaven. The Picts were at this time but ill prepared to reſiſt ſo dangerous an invaſion. Their valiant king Brude had died of vexation for not being able to compoſe the diſſenſions of his ſubjects, and purſue his victory; and his brother Druſt, who had ſucceeded him, was neither ſo brave nor ſo well beloved. This prince however, collecting his forces, marched to meet the in- A.D. 801, to 901.

[68] Boeth. l. 10. Fordun, l. 4. c. 3.

A. D. 801, to 901. vaders of his country: a battle was fought, in which the Scots obtained a complete victory; and animating each other with this cry, "Remember the death of Alpine!" they killed prodigious numbers of the Picts in the purſuit [69]. Soon after this victory, all the provinces of the Pictiſh kingdom to the north of the frith of Forth ſubmitted to the conqueror; who, leaving garriſons in the ſtrong places of that country, paſſed the Forth with his army. But he was preſently overtaken by the diſagreeable news, that the Picts had retaken all their caſtles, and put his garriſons to the ſword. This obliged him to march back into the north, where he recovered the fortreſſes, and reduced the country to a more perfect ſubjection. In the mean time the Pictiſh king, having collected a conſiderable army of his ſubjects in the ſouthern and yet unconquered provinces of his kingdom, croſſed the rivers Forth and Tay, and encamped at the village of Scoon, on the northern bank of the laſt of theſe rivers. At this place the laſt great battle between the Picts and Scots was fought, in which the Picts were entirely defeated, their king and chief nobility ſlain, and almoſt their whole army cut in pieces, or drowned in the river Tay in attempting to eſcape [70]. After this great victory, Kenneth met with no more oppoſition from the Picts, but took poſſeſſion of their whole kingdom; which he united to his own

[69] Buchan. l. 3. ſub. fin. [70] Id. ibid.

domi-

dominions, and thereby became the firſt monarch of all Scotland, about the year 842[71]. There is not the leaſt probability in the tragical accounts given by ſome Scotch hiſtorians, of the total extirpation of the Picts; which would have been equally inhuman and imprudent. There might indeed be ſome unwarrantable cruelties practiſed by the Scots in the firſt heat of conqueſt; but there is ſufficient evidence, that the great body of the Pictiſh nation ſurvived the downfall of their ſtate; and mingling with their conquerors, gradually loſt their own name[72]. The victorious Kenneth, after he had reduced the Picts to an entire ſubjection to his authority, made frequent inroads on the kingdom of Northumberland, and had wars both with the Danes and Cumbrian Britons; but of the particulars of theſe wars we are not informed[73]. This great prince finiſhed his life and reign, in his palace at Fortaviot, February 13, A. D. 854. A. D. 801, to 901.

Dunvenald, the ſon of Alpine, ſucceeded his brother Kenneth; and is repreſented by Fordun, the moſt ancient Scotch hiſtorian, as a brave and warlike prince, who ſuppreſſed ſome inſurrections of the diſcontented Picts, and cultivated peace with all his neighbours[74]. This character is confirmed by the ancient chronicle publiſhed by Father Innes, which acquaints us, that he held a convention of his nobility at Fortaviot, in Dunvenald king of Scots.

[71] See Innes's Eſſays, vol. 1. p. 140.
[72] Id. ibid.
[73] Id. vol. 2. p. 783.
[74] Fordun, l. 4. c. 15.

A.D. 801, to 901. which he revived the good laws of his predeceſſors [75]. But Boethius and Buchanan give a very different character and hiſtory of this prince, repreſenting him as a moſt abandoned profligate and poltroon, who was defeated and taken priſoner by Oſbert and Ella, kings of Northumberland, yielded up the beſt part of his kingdom to obtain his liberty, and was caſt into priſon by his own ſubjects; where he put an end to his life by ſelf-murder [76]. This account however, being unſupported by any evidence, and contrary to the teſtimony of more ancient hiſtorians, merits no regard. Dunvenald died in his palace at Belachoir, A. D. 858.

Conſtantine and Eth kings of Scots. Conſtantine, the eldeſt ſon of Kenneth, the illuſtrious conqueror of the Picts, mounted the throne of Scotland on the death of his uncle Dunvenald. The Danes, who had made ſome occaſional deſcents on the coaſts of Scotland in the two preceding reigns, now invaded it with a more powerful army, which landed in Fife. Conſtantine, falling upon one half of this army, when it was ſeparated from the other by the river Leven, defeated that diviſion. Fluſhed with this victory, he ſoon after paſſed the river, and raſhly aſſaulted the other diviſion of the Danes in their camp, which was ſtrongly fortified. Here he met with a repulſe; and the greateſt part of his army, conſiſting of Picts, who were not yet very hearty in the ſervice, they ſhamefully fled,

[75] Innes, vol. 2. p. 783. [76] Boeth. l. 10. Buchan. l. 6.

leaving

leaving Conſtantine in the hands of the enemy, who beheaded him in a neighbouring cave, A. D. 874 [77]. He was ſucceeded by his brother Eth, ſurnamed *The wing-footed*, on account of his ſwiftneſs; who reigned little more than one year, being mortally wounded in a battle near Inverury, by his couſin Grig, the ſon of Dunvenald, who claimed the crown as his right [78]. A.D. 801, to 901.

Grig Macdunvenal, denominated by the modern Scotch hiſtorians *Gregory the Great*, mounted the throne of Scotland, A. D. 875, and ſpent the firſt years of his reign in regulating the internal police of his kingdom, and conciliating the affections of all his ſubjects. He then reduced the Strath-Cluyd Britons to a more entire obedience to his authority, took poſſeſſion of the town of Berwick, and even reduced ſome part of the kingdom of Northumberland [79]. Having acquired great fame by theſe exploits, he was earneſtly intreated by the friends of Donach king of Dublin to come to the protection of that young prince, who was in danger of being dethroned by ſome ambitious chieftains. In compliance with theſe intreaties, he tranſported an army from Galloway into Ireland, defeated the rebels, took the city of Dublin, eſtabliſhed Donach on the throne of his anceſtors, and then returned home crowned with laurels [80]. This great prince, after a glorious reign of near eighteen years, died A.D. 892. Gregory the Great king of Scots.

[77] Fordun, l. 4. c. 16. Boeth. l. 10. Buchan. l. 6.
[78] Id. ibid. [79] Id. ibid. [80] Id. ibid.

Dun-

A.D. 801, to 901. Dunvenald king of Scots.

Dunvenald, the ſon of Conſtantine, ſucceeded Gregory the Great, and maintained with ſpirit the acquiſitions of his predeceſſor. Towards the concluſion of his reign, the inhabitants of Roſs and Moray made war againſt each other, with great ferocity and much bloodſhed. The king, marching into theſe parts with an army, reſtored the peace of the country, and put the chief ring-leaders in theſe commotions to death; but did not long ſurvive this event, dying at Forres A. D. 903 [81].

SECTION IV.

The civil and military hiſtory of Great Britain, from the acceſſion of Edward the Elder, A. D. 901, *to the death of Edward the Martyr,* A. D. 978.

A.D. 901, to 978. Acceſſion of Edward the Elder.

EDWARD, the eldeſt ſurviving ſon of Alfred the Great, ſucceeded his illuſtrious father in the throne of England, A. D. 901; though not without oppoſition from his couſin Ethelwald, the ſon of Ethelbert, the elder brother of Alfred. Ethered and Alfred had ſucceeded to the crown by virtue of their father's will, and the univerſal conſent of the people, to the excluſion of Ethelwald, who was then an infant; but being now in the prime of life,

[81] Fordun, l. 4. c. 20.

he

he was not diſpoſed to yield ſo tamely to one of his own age[1]. Having, therefore, collected his partiſans, he ſeized and fortified Winburn: but apprehending that it was not tenable, when Edward with his army had reached Badbury, he made his eſcape, and retired into Northumberland, and engaged the Danes of that country to eſpouſe his cauſe[2]. But before they took the field, and declared openly in his favour, Ethelwald made a trip to the continent; where he ſpent near three years, collecting an army of adventurers of ſeveral nations, with which he landed in England A. D. 904[3]. Soon after his arrival, he was joined by great multitudes of Northumbrian and other Danes, which enabled him to over-run all Mercia, plundering and deſtroying the country as he advanced: but having raſhly engaged in a ſkirmiſh againſt a party of Kentiſh men, he fell in the action; after which his army diſbanded[4]. A. D. 901, to 978.

Edward being thus delivered from this dangerous rival, ſpent ſeveral years in reducing the Danes of Eſſex, Eaſt-Anglia, and Mercia, to a thorough obedience to his authority, and in building towns and caſtles in the moſt convenient places for keeping them in ſubjection[5]. It was ſtill a more difficult taſk to reduce the Danes of Northumberland to order and ſubmiſſion, on account of their greater numbers and

History of his reign.

[1] Chron. Saxon. p. 100. [2] Id. ibid. [3] Id. ibid.
[4] Hen. Hunt. l. 5. [5] Chron. Saxon. p. 102.

greater

A.D. 901, to 978. greater diſtance. To accompliſh this, Edward fitted out a fleet of one hundred ſhips in the ports of Kent, with which he ſailed towards Northumberland A. D. 911. The Northumbrian Danes, imagining that his chief force was on board this fleet, inſtead of ſtaying to defend their own country, marched ſouthwards, in hopes of indemnifying themſelves by the ſpoils of thoſe richer provinces. This artful ſcheme at firſt ſucceeded to their wiſh: they advanced far into the country, and made a prodigious booty, without meeting with any oppoſition. But in their return home, they were overtaken at Tetenhall in Staffordſhire, by an army of Weſt-Saxons and Mercians, who defeated them, with great ſlaughter, and recovered all the booty[6]. The Northumbrian Danes were ſo much weakened by the loſs which they ſuſtained in this battle, that they remained tolerably quiet for ſeveral years. Edward, however, was kept in continual action during his whole reign, by the frequent invaſions of the piratical Danes from abroad, and the no leſs frequent inſurrections of their countrymen ſettled in England. But this brave prince, by his vigilance and activity, repelled all thoſe invaſions, and ſuppreſſed all theſe inſurrections, before they had done much miſchief. In order to prevent the like dangers and diſturbances for the future, he built and fortified an incredible number of forts and towns in all

[6] Chron. Saxon. p. 203.

parts

parts of England[7]. In all theſe noble toils for the defence and ſecurity of his dominions, Edward was greatly aſſiſted by his ſiſter Ethelfleda, widow of Ethered governor of Mercia. This heroic princeſs (who inherited more of the ſpirit of the great Alfred than any of his children), deſpiſing the humble cares and trifling amuſements of her own ſex, commanded armies, gained victories, built cities, and performed exploits which would have done honour to the greateſt princes[8]. Having governed Mercia eight years after the death of her huſband, ſhe died A. D. 920, and Edward took the government of that country into his own hand[9]. After this he not only ſecured, but extended his dominions, and by a ſucceſsful expedition into Wales A. D. 922, reduced the three princes of that country to a ſtate of ſubjection; and the next year he brought the Strath-Cluyd Britons into the ſame condition[10]. In the midſt of theſe ſucceſſes, Edward ended his life and reign at Farington in Berkſhire A. D. 925. This king was very happy in his family, having left behind him five ſons, of which three, viz. Athelſtan, Edmund, and Edred, were ſucceſſively kings of England, and nine daughters, of which four were married to the greateſt princes then in Europe[11].

A. D. 901, to 978.

Athelſtan, the eldeſt ſon of Edward, ſucceeded him in the throne of England, and was

Acceſſion of Athelſtan.

[7] Chron. Saxon. p. 103—107. [8] Id. ibid. [9] Id. p. 107.
[10] Id. p. 110. [11] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 5.

ſolemnly

A. D. 901, to 978.

ſolemnly crowned at Kingſton upon Thames, by Athelm archbiſhop of Canterbury [12]. Hiſtorians, both ancient and modern, are much divided in their opinions about this prince's birth, ſome denying, and others aſſerting his legitimacy. On the one hand, there is ſufficient evidence, that his mother Egwina was a lady of mean birth, which ſeems to have given occaſion to this diſpute about the legitimacy of her ſon; and, on the other hand, it is no leſs evident, that Athelſtan was treated by his grandfather Alfred the Great, and by his father Edward, with every mark of diſtinction due to a legitimate prince [13]. However this may be, a conſpiracy is ſaid to have been formed by a nobleman named *Alfred*, and ſome others, to take king Athelſtan priſoner, put out his eyes, and raiſe one of his brothers to the throne. This plot was happily diſcovered, and Alfred brought to his trial: but the proof of his guilt not being clear, he was ſent to Rome to declare his innocence by oath before the Pope; which he did accordingly; but ſoon after died, with ſuch circumſtances as, in that ſuperſtitious age, were eſteemed ſufficient indications of his guilt [14].

Makes Sithric king of Northumberland.

Sithric, prince of the Northumbrian Danes, was the only perſon who enjoyed any ſhadow of independent authority in England at this time; and Athelſtan, in order to attach him firmly to

[12] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6. [13] See Biograph. Britan. vol. 1. p. 60.
[14] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6.

his

his intereſt, upon his renouncing Paganiſm, and embracing Chriſtianity, gave him his own ſiſter Edgetha in marriage[15]. To render him more worthy of this alliance, and of the title of king, he yielded to him the ſovereignty of the whole country from the river Tees to Edinburgh, which ſeems then to have been the northern extremity of the Engliſh territories[16]. But the ſucceſs of this wiſe meaſure was defeated by the death of Sithric, and the ſucceſſion of his two ſons by a former wife, Anlaff and Guthfert, who renounced Chriſtianity, and caſt off all ſubjection to the king of England. Athelſtan, upon this, marched an army into Northumberland, and ſoon obliged the two raſh princes to abandon their country, Anlaff flying into Ireland, and Guthfert to the court of Conſtantine king of Scotland[17]. Ambaſſadors were immediately ſent to Conſtantine to demand Guthfert: but that prince, unwilling to violate the laws of hoſpitality, allowed his gueſt to eſcape; and no leſs unwilling to embroil himſelf with ſo powerful an enemy, propoſed a perſonal interview with Athelſtan; which accordingly took place at Dackers in Cumberland, where all their differences were compromiſed in an amicable manner[18]. A.D. 901, to 978.

This amity was neither cordial nor of long continuance. For Conſtantine, envying the pro- Invades Scotland.

15 Alured. Bever. l. 8. p. 109.
16 J. Wallingford, apud Gale, l. 1. p. 540.
17 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6. 18 Id. ibid.

ſperity,

A. D. 901, to 978.

ſperity, and dreading the power of Athelſtan, formed a confederacy againſt him, into which Anlaff, the pretender to Northumberland, Ewen prince of Cumberland, and ſome other petty princes entered. Athelſtan having received intelligence of this confederacy, invaded Scotland A. D. 934, both by ſea and land, before Conſtantine was prepared for his defence; which obliged that prince to ſue for peace, which he obtained upon making certain ſubmiſſions [19].

The Scots, &c. invade England.

Athelſtan was no ſooner returned into his own dominions, than his enemies renewed their confederacy, and acting with greater caution than they had done before, employed four years in making preparations for a formidable invaſion of England. At length, all things being ready, the allies united their forces, and invaded England A. D. 938, with a very powerful army, compoſed of many different nations. Athelſtan raiſed his forces with great expedition, and came within view of his enemies at a place called *Brunanburgh* by our ancient hiſtorians; the true ſituation of which is not certainly known [20].

Story of Anlaff, one of the confederates.

While the two armies lay near this place, Anlaff practiſed the ſame ſtratagem to gain intelligence, which Alfred the Great had formerly practiſed with ſo much ſucceſs. He entered the Engliſh camp in the diſguiſe of a ſtrolling minſtrel, was introduced to Athelſtan's tent, and

[19] Hoveden. Annal. Chron. Saxon. p. 111.
[20] Chron. Saxon. p. 112.

played

played before him and his chief officers at an entertainment; for which he was rewarded with a piece of money at his departure. An abſurd pride would not ſuffer Anlaff to carry off this money; but when he had got at ſome diſtance from the king's tent, and imagined no perſon obſerved him, he depoſited it in the ground. This action was perceived by a ſoldier, who viewing the pretended harper more narrowly, diſcovered who he was. The ſoldier had formerly ſerved under Anlaff, and from a principle of honour would not betray his old maſter; but as ſoon as he was out of danger, informed Athelſtan of his diſcovery; and at the ſame time humbly adviſed him to remove his tent to a conſiderable diſtance from the place where it then ſtood. The wiſdom of this advice very ſoon appeared. For a biſhop with his retinue arriving in the camp ſoon after, unfortunately pitched his tent where the royal pavilion had ſtood, and the very next night was attacked, and cut in pieces, with all his followers [21]. A.D. 901, to 978.

The noiſe occaſioned by this attack on the Engliſh camp brought on a general engagement between the two armies, which continued from morning to night, with incredible fury and prodigious ſlaughter on both ſides. This battle, which was long diſtinguiſhed by the name of *the great battle*, is deſcribed in very pompous ſtrains by the Saxon Chronicle, and all our ancient Battle of Brunanburgh, and victory of Athelſtan over the confederates.

[21] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6.

A.D. 901, to 978.

hiſtorians [22]. Without following theſe writers through their long details, which are not very intelligible, it is enough to ſay, that victory, which was ſo bravely diſputed, and ſo long doubtful, declared at laſt in favour of the Engliſh; that no fewer than five of the allied princes, and twelve chieftains were ſlain; and that Conſtantine and Anlaff made their eſcape with great difficulty [23]. This glorious victory not only reduced all England under the dominion of Athelſtan, and obliged the princes of Wales who had been concerned in the late conſpiracy to ſubmit to pay a very great additional tribute, but it alſo raiſed his reputation ſo high among foreign nations, that the greateſt princes in Europe courted his alliance [24].

Death of Athelſtan, and acceſſion of Edmund.

Athelſtan did not live long to enjoy this great proſperity, but died at Gloceſter A. D. 941; and having never been married, was ſucceeded in the throne of England by his brother Edmund [25].

Edmund defeats the five burghers.

This prince was in the bloom of youth, being only eighteen years of age when he began his reign. In the time of Alfred the Great, a colony of Danes had been allowed to ſettle in the five towns of Derby, Nottingham, Leiceſter, Lincoln, and Stamford, where their poſterity ſtill continued under the name of the Five Burghers.

[22] Chron. Saxon. p. 112, 113. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6. Ethelwerd, c. 5. Ingulf. Brompt. p. 839. Huntin. l. 5, &c. &c.
[23] Id. ibid. [24] Ingulf. Hiſt.
[25] Chron. Saxon. p. 114.

Edmund,

Edmund, obſerving that theſe five burghers had been ever ready to favour the inſurrections of their countrymen, thought it imprudent to ſuffer them to continue any longer ſo near the centre of his dominions; and therefore he removed them, A. D. 942, from theſe towns, and ſettled them in other places [26]. A.D. 901, to 978.

Anlaff, the famous pretender to the kingdom of Northumberland, who had fled into Ireland after the unfortunate battle of Brunanburgh, hearing of the death of Athelſtan, returned into Britain accompanied with his couſin Reginald, and attempted to raiſe freſh commotions. But Edmund having marched againſt them before they were prepared, the two princes, with many of their followers, made the moſt humble ſubmiſſions; and at the ſame time declaring their willingneſs to become Chriſtians, their ſubmiſſions were accepted, and Edmund ſtood godfather to them both at their baptiſm [27]. It ſoon appeared, that their profeſſions of ſubmiſſion, and of Chriſtianity, were equally inſincere; which obliged Edmund to march his army a ſecond time into Northumberland, from whence he expelled the two apoſtate princes, and once more reduced that country to his obedience, A. D. 944 [28]. As the Cumbrian and Strath-Cluyd Britons had conſtantly aſſiſted the Northumbrian Danes in all their revolts, Edmund marched his Reduces Northumberland and Cumberland.

[26] Chron. Saxon. p. 114. Hen. Hunt. l. 5.
[27] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7. [28] Id. ibid. Chron. Saxon. p. 114.

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army into their country A. D. 945; and having conquered it, he beſtowed it on Malcolm king of Scotland, on condition of his defending the north of England from the inſurrections and invaſions of the Danes [29].

Death of king Edmund.

Theſe firſt meaſures of Edmund were conducted with ſo much prudence and ſpirit, that the Engliſh had reaſon to hope for a happy and glorious reign. But theſe hopes were blaſted by the immature death of that young prince, which happened in a very extraordinary manner. As he was ſolemnizing the feaſt of St. Auſtin, the apoſtle of the Engliſh, at Pucklechurch in Gloceſterſhire, an audacious robber, named Leolf, had the confidence to enter the hall where the king and his nobles were feaſting. An officer attempted to turn him out; but Leolf making reſiſtance, the king, flushed with liquor, and inflamed with paſſion, ſprung from his ſeat, ſeized him by the hair, and brought him to the ground. The ruffian reduced to this extremity, drew his dagger, and plunged it into the bosom of his ſovereign, who inſtantly expired [30]. Thus periſhed this hopeful prince, A. D. 948, in the ſeventh year of his reign, and twenty-fourth of his age.

Acceſſion and reign of Edred.

Though Edmund left two infant ſons, Edwi and Edgar, he was ſucceeded by his brother Edred, who mounted the throne without the

29 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7. Chron. Saxon. p. 115.
30 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7. Hen. Hunt. l. 5.

leaſt

leaſt oppoſition. It was now become a kind of cuſtom for the Northumbrian Danes to revolt at the acceſſion of every new king, to try his ſtrength and ſpirit. On this occaſion they found, that Edred was no leſs alert than his predeceſſors; for appearing in the heart of their country, at the head of an army, before they were ready for reſiſtance, they were obliged to make the moſt humble ſubmiſſions to avert the impending ſtorm [31]. Malcolm king of Scots was alſo induced by the proximity of Edred and his army, to renew his profeſſions of fidelity [32]. Having thus reduced every thing in the north to perfect order and ſubmiſſion, he returned into the ſouth, in hopes of enjoying the bleſſings of a laſting peace. But it was not long before he diſcovered that theſe hopes were not well founded. For the turbulent Northumbrians, impatient of tranquillity, broke out again into rebellion, firſt under the conduct of the famous Anlaff, and afterwards under the command of one of their countrymen named *Erie*. Edred, juſtly incenſed at their turbulence and infidelity, deſolated their country with fire and ſword, diveſted it for ever of the name of a kingdom, appointing one Oſulf, an Engliſhman, to the government of it, A. D. 952, with the title of *Earl* [33]. From this time Edred was no more diſturbed with war; but falling into an infirm ſtate of A.D. 901, to 978

[31] Hen. Hunt. l. 5. W Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7. [32] Id. ibid.
[33] Hoveden. Annal. pars prior. p. 243. Hen. Hunt. l. 5.

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health, he unfortunately reſigned his conſcience, his treaſures, and his authority, into the hands of St. Dunſtan, by whom they were very much abuſed. After languiſhing ſome time, Edred died in the flower of his youth, A. D. 955 [34].

Acceſſion and reign of Edwi.

Edwi, the eldeſt ſon of the late king Edmund, ſucceeded his uncle Edred, and was crowned at Kingſton, by Odo archbiſhop of Canterbury [35]. Nothing can be more melancholy than the ſtory of this unhappy prince. He was hardly ſeventeen years of age when he mounted the throne, remarkably beautiful in his perſon, and not untoward in his diſpoſitions; but a violent paſſion which he contracted for his couſin, the fair Elgiva, became a ſource of many misfortunes to them both. His marriage with that princeſs was oppoſed by Odo archbiſhop of Canterbury, and by the famous St. Dunſtan, the great patron and idol of the monks of thoſe times, on account of their being within the prohibited degrees of kindred. Edwi, deaf to their advice, ſurmounted every obſtacle, and married the object of his affections; which brought upon him the indignation of Odo, Dunſtan, and all their monkiſh followers, who exclaimed againſt this marriage as a moſt horrid and unpardonable crime, and treated both the king and queen with the moſt indecent rudeneſs, breaking in upon their privacies, and tearing them from each other's arms [36].

34 Hoveden. Annal. pars prior, p. 243. Hen. Hunt. l. 5.
35 Hoveden. Annal. p. 244. 36 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7.

Edwi,

Edwi, enraged at this intolerable inſolence, and excited to vengeance by his beloved Elgiva, baniſhed Dunſtan out of the kingdom, and expelled the Benedictine monks from ſeveral monaſteries, reſtoring them to the ſecular canons, their original owners[37]. Theſe meaſures, though juſt and reaſonable, raiſed the reſentment of the iraſcible monks, and of their mighty patron archbiſhop Odo, to the greateſt height. That brutal bigot, forgetting all the ties of duty and humanity, ſeized the queen by a ſtrong party of armed men, defaced her beauty with a hot iron, and ſent her into Ireland[38]. To put it out of the power of the unhappy Edwi to puniſh the authors of this moſt cruel injury, Odo and his monks poiſoned the minds of his ſubjects by their calumnies, and excited the people of Northumberland and Mercia to rebellion, placing his younger brother Edgar, who was then only thirteen years of age, at the head of the inſurgents[39]. As Edwi did not expect, ſo he was not prepared for this event. Edgar, aſſiſted by Dunſtan, now returned from baniſhment, ſoon made himſelf maſter of the whole country to the north of the river Thames; of which he was declared ſovereign, with the title of *King of Mercia*[40]. To complete the misfortunes of the wretched Edwi, he received intelligence, that his beloved wife Elgiva, having recovered from her wounds, and A.D. 901, to 978.

37 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7.
38 Anglia Sacra, l. 2. p. 84.
39 Id. ibid.
40 R. Hoveden. Annal.

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eſcaped from her keepers, and returned to England, had been intercepted at Gloceſter, as ſhe was haſtening towards him, and put to death, with circumſtances of peculiar cruelty [41]. He did not long ſurvive this unfortunate object of his affections; for having retired to the kingdom of Weſſex, which ſtill continued faithful to his intereſts, he there died of a broken heart, A.D. 959; by which his brother Edgar became ſovereign of all England.

Acceſſion and reign of Edgar the Peaceable.

Though that prince had diſcovered a criminal impatience to aſcend the throne (for which his youth is the beſt excuſe), he filled it with great honour to himſelf and advantage to his ſubjects; by which he obtained the title of *The honour and delight of the Engliſh nation* [42]. He was alſo ſurnamed *Edgar the Peaceable;* an appellation which he acquired, by being always ſo well prepared for war, that neither his own ſubjects, nor other nations, dared to diſturb the tranquillity of his dominions. His attention to maritime affairs was the chief glory of his reign, and his fleet was ſo powerful, and ſo well conducted, that it effectually ſecured the coaſts from all inſults, and procured him much reſpect from neighbouring ſtates and princes [43]. Eight of theſe princes (among whom was Kenneth III. king of Scots) are ſaid to have attended the court of

[41] Anglia Sacra, p. 84.
[42] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 8. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607.
[43] Alured. Beverlien. l. 8. p. 113. Brompt. p. 869.

Edgar

Edgar at Cheſter, and to have rowed him in the royal barge on the river Dee, as a mark of their ſubjection, according to ſome hiſtorians, or of their regard and friendſhip, according to others. If this event really happened, it was perhaps no more than a frolic, without any ſerious meaning[44]. The magnificence of his court attracted many foreigners, from different parts of the continent, who are ſaid to have imported the vices of their reſpective countries, and corrupted the ſimple manners of the Engliſh[45]. He impoſed a new and very uncommon kind of tribute on the princes of Wales; exacting from them, inſtead of the money and cattle which they paid before, three hundred wolves heads yearly; which occaſioned ſuch a keen purſuit of theſe deſtructive animals, that their numbers were very much diminiſhed in a few years[46]. Edgar is alſo celebrated for his diligence and impartiality in the adminiſtration of juſtice; by which he gave a great check to the too prevailing crimes of theft and robbery[47]. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that as this prince owed much of the proſperity of his reign to the powerful ſupport of St. Dunſtan and his monks, who were the idols and oracles of the people, ſo he owes much of his fame with poſterity to the pens of monkiſh hiſtorians. Theſe cloiſtered annaliſts ſet no bounds to their abuſe of thoſe

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44 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 8. Floren. Wigorn. A. D. 973.
45 Floren. Wigorn. A. D. 973.
46 Id. ibid.
47 Id. ibid.

princes

A.D. 901, to 978.

princes who were unfriendly to their order, nor to their panegyrics on thoſe who were their patrons and benefactors. According to them, Edgar was not only a brave, wiſe, and active prince, but alſo a prodigious ſaint: a character to which he had not the leaſt pretenſions, as appears from the accounts of his very criminal amours, preſerved by theſe very hiſtorians[48]. This prince, ſo great in his public, and ſo exceptionable in his private character, died A. D. 975, in the ſeventeenth year of his reign, and thirty-third of his life, leaving two ſons, Edward and Ethelred, who ſucceſſively mounted the throne of England.

Diſpute about the ſucceſſion.

The ſucceſſion was for ſome time diſputed by theſe two young princes, or rather by their reſpective parties. Elfrida, the queen-dowager, had formed a powerful party to ſupport the pretenſions of her ſon Ethelred, who was then only ſeven years of age, in hopes of having the adminiſtration in her own hands during his minority[49]. This party pretended, that Edward was illegitimate, and that his mother had never been regularly married to the late king. But Edward, by his riper age, his father's laſt will, and the popularity of St. Dunſtan, who eſpouſed his intereſt, at length prevailed, and was crowned by that buſtling prelate[50].

[48] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 8. Hoveden. Brompt. p. 865, &c.
[49] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 9.
[50] R. Hoveden. Annal.

This young prince (whoſe ſhort reign was one continued ſeries of eccleſiaſtical diſputes) was of too gentle a diſpoſition for that iron age in which he lived. He ſhewed no reſentment againſt thoſe who had oppoſed his ſucceſſion, treated his rival brother with the greateſt kindneſs, and behaved reſpectfully to his ambitious ſtepmother. But all this goodneſs made no impreſſion on the unrelenting heart of that aſpiring woman. Elfrida ſtill meditated the deſtruction of this amiable prince; and it was not long before the unſuſpecting innocence of Edward afforded her an opportunity of executing her deſign; for as he was hunting one day near Corfe caſtle, where ſhe reſided, he rode up to the caſtle, without any attendance, to pay her a paſſing viſit. The treacherous Elfrida received him with great ſeeming kindneſs; and upon his declining to alight, preſented him with a cup of wine; but as he was drinking, he was ſtabbed in the back, either by her own hand, or by her order. Edward, finding himſelf wounded, put ſpurs to his horſe; but fainting through loſs of blood, he fell from the ſaddle, and was dragged along by his foot ſticking in the ſtirrup till he expired [51]. Thus fell this amiable young prince A. D. 979; and though religion was no way concerned in his death, he obtained the name of *Edward the Martyr*, on account of the innocence of his life, and the many miracles which the monks pre-

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Acceſſion, reign, and death of Edward the Martyr.

[51] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 9.

tended

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tended were wrought at his grave [52]. The ſucceſſion of her ſon Ethelred protected the cruel Elfrida from all puniſhment for this horrid deed; but though ſhe lived many years after, building monaſteries, performing penances, and practiſing all the tricks of ſuperſtition, ſhe never could recover either the peace of her own mind or the good opinion of the world [53].

BEFORE we proceed to give an account of the civil and military tranſactions of the long and calamitous reign of Ethelred, it may be proper to bring down the hiſtory of the other nations of Britain, from the beginning of the tenth century, to this period.

Hiſtory of Wales.

In the beginning of the tenth century, Anarawd, the eldeſt ſon of Roderic the Great, was prince of North Wales, and Cadelh, his ſecond ſon, prince of South Wales and Poweſland. Cadelh dying A. D. 907, was ſucceeded in his principality by his eldeſt ſon Howel Dha, or Howel the Good, the famous legiſlator of the Welſh; and about ſix years after, Anarawd, at his death, was ſucceeded in his principality of North Wales by his eldeſt ſon Edwal Voel [54]. But though theſe two princes poſſeſſed the chief authority in Wales, yet each of them had ſeveral brothers, to whom appanages were allotted, and who were a kind of petty ſovereigns in their re-

52 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 9.

53 Id. ibid.

54 Powel, Hiſt. Wales, p. 44, 45.

ſpective diſtricts. This was the occaſion of many wars in Wales, and of much confuſion in its hiſtory. Edwal Voel, the chief prince of North Wales, was ſlain in a battle by ſome Daniſh pirates, A. D. 939: and though he left no fewer than ſix ſons, yet his couſin Howel Dha was ſo famous for his wiſdom, juſtice, and other virtues, that he obtained the dominion of all Wales, and retained it to his death, which happened A. D. 948 [55]. A. D. 901, to 978.

It muſt be confeſſed, that we have no very diſtinct account in hiſtory of the preciſe time when the princes of Wales became tributaries to the kings of England. It is, however, ſufficiently evident, that they were ſo in the former part of the tenth century. For by the laws of Howel Dha, the king of Aberfraw, or the chief king of Wales, is appointed to pay a fine of ſixty-three pounds of ſilver to the king of London, when he receives his kingdom from his hand, and a certain number of dogs, hawks, and horſes, annually [56]. Some Engliſh hiſtorians affirm indeed, that Athelſtan, who was cotemporary with Howel Dha, impoſed on the prince of North Wales an annual tribute of twenty pounds of gold, three hundred pounds of ſilver, twenty-five thouſand oxen, and an indefinite number of dogs and hawks [57]. But this is quite incredible; and the ancient laws of Wales, which have been The Welſh tributaries to the Engliſh.

[55] Powel, Hiſt. Wales, p. 44, 45.
[56] Leges Hoeli Dha, p. 199.
[57] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c 6.

admirably

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admirably well preſerved, are much better authorities than the teſtimony of any private hiſtorian [58].

Hiſtory of Wales continued.

The death of Howel Dha was much and juſtly lamented by the Welſh, as they were thereby diſunited, and involved in civil wars. South Wales was divided between Owen, Run, Roderic, and Edwin, the four ſons of Howel Dha, and North Wales between Jevaf and Jago, two of the ſons of Edwal Voel; and a war was carried on between theſe near relations, with no little animoſity, for ſeveral years. In the courſe of this war, the ſons of Howel Dha were ſeveral times defeated, and the two brothers Jevaf and Jago obtained the ſovereignty of all Wales: but ſoon after, quarrelling between themſelves, Jevaf was taken and impriſoned by Jago, A. D. 967. Some years after, Howel, the ſon of Jevaf, collected a great number of followers, defeated and expelled his uncle Jago, and delivered his father from priſon; but did not reſtore him to his authority. While the princes of North Wales were engaged in theſe unnatural quarrels, Eneon, the ſon of Owen the eldeſt ſon of Howel Dha, recovered the dominion of South Wales. The Welſh, in this period, were not only much afflicted by theſe inceſſant broils among their own princes, but frequently plundered by the piratical Danes, and often invaded by their more powerful neighbours the Engliſh; which rendered

[58] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 6.

their

their condition, in ſpite of all their native valour, very unhappy [59]. A. D. 901, to 978.

Conſtantine, the ſon of Eth, and grandſon of the illuſtrious Kenneth, conqueror of the Picts, mounted the throne of Scotland in the third year of the tenth century, and reigned about thirty-five years. He was cotemporary with the two great Kings of England, Edward the Elder, and Athelſtan; with whom he had ſeveral wars; but the circumſtances of theſe wars are ſo differently related by the Scotch and Engliſh hiſtorians, that it is very difficult to diſcover the truth with certainty. The moſt probable account of theſe wars hath been already given in the hiſtory of Athelſtan. It is further probable, or rather certain, that Conſtantine had been obliged to relinquiſh to Athelſtan the ſovereignty of the low countries, between the rivers Tweed and Forth, which had been chiefly inhabited by Saxons for ſeveral centuries, though they had ſometimes been under the dominion of the Picts and Scots [60]. Conſtantine ſeems alſo to have interfered conſiderably in the affairs of Ireland; but the particulars of theſe tranſactions are not diſtinctly known [61]. We have very different accounts of the time and manner of this prince's death; ſome hiſtorians affirming, that he fell in the fatal battle of Brunanburgh, A. D. 938; while others aſſert, on better authority, that he

Hiſtory of Scotland, reign of Conſtantine.

59 Powel, Hiſt. p. 58—67.

60 Ethelred, p. 357. Brompt. p. 838. Fordun, l. 4. c. 23.

61 Innes's Eſſays, vol. 2. p. 786.

made

A. D. 901, to 978. made his escape from that battle; and that he soon after resigned his crown, and retired into the monastery of the Culdees at St. Andrew's, where he spent the five last years of his life[62].

Malcolm I. Upon the resignation of Constantine, Mael, the son of Dunvenald, called by historians *Malcolm* I. became king of Scotland; and finding his country much exhausted by the late wars, wisely resolved to cultivate peace with all his neighbours. Edmund king of England having suppressed a rebellion of the Danes of Northumberland A. D. 944, and subdued the Cumbrian Britons the year after, gave the government of their country to Malcolm, to engage him in an alliance against the Danes, their common enemies[63]. Malcolm, some years after, with the consent of Edred king of England, transferred this government to Indulf, his presumptive successor; and from thenceforward Cumberland became a kind of appanage to the apparent heirs of the kings of Scotland[64]. This good king was murdered by a gang of robbers, at Ulrine in Moray, A. D. 952.

Indulf. Indulf prince of Cumberland, son of the late king Constantine, succeeded Malcolm I. in the throne of Scotland, and bestowed his principality on Duff, the son of Malcolm. Indulf continued faithful to his engagements with the English

[62] W Malmf. l. 2. c. 6. Ingulf. Hist. Innes's Essays, vol. 2. p. 786. Fordun, l. 4. c. 23.

[63] W. Malmf. l. 2. c. 7. Fordun, l. 4. c. 25. [64] Id. ibid.

against

againſt the Danes; which gained him the favour of the firſt, and drew upon him the indignation of the laſt of theſe nations. From one of the kings of England, his cotemporaries (which were Edrèd, Edwi, and Edgar), he obtained a voluntary ceſſion of the caſtle and town of Edinburgh, with the fine country between the Tweed and Forth; which from thenceforward was conſidered as a part of the kingdom of Scotland [65]. A. D. 901, to 978.

The Danes, enraged at this good agreement between the Britiſh monarchs, appeared with a great fleet and army on the coaſt of Scotland; and after having in vain attempted to land in ſeveral places, put out to ſea, as if they had deſigned to abandon the enterpriſe; but returning ſuddenly, they landed without oppoſition near Cullen, in the country of Boyn. Indulf haſtened thither with his army, engaged and defeated the Danes; but was unfortunately killed in the purſuit, A. D. 961 [66].

Duff prince of Cumberland then became king of Scotland, and ceded (as was now become the cuſtom) his principality to Culen, the ſon of Indulf. Nothing can more clearly demonſtrate the want of authentic materials to fill up the hiſtory of Scotland at this period, than the ridiculous tales of witchcrafts and prodigies which Boece and Buchanan relate in the life of this king [67]. The truth is, we know no more of him Duff.

[65] Innes's Eſſays, vol. 2. p. 787.
[66] Fordun, l. 4. c. 25.
[67] Boeth. l. 11. Buchan. l. 6.

A.D. 901, to 978. but this, that he was very active in his endeavours to ſuppreſs the bands of robbers with which his kingdom was infeſted; and that he was ſurpriſed and ſlain by ſome of thoſe lawleſs miſcreants, near the town of Forres, in the fifth year of his reign, A. D. 965[68].

Culen. Culen ſucceeded Duff; and is repreſented by all our hiſtorians as a libidinous and profligate prince, who was murdered by Eadhard thane of Methwen, for having violated the chaſtity of his daughter, A. D. 970[69].

Kenneth II. Kenneth II. ſon of Malcolm I. and brother of the late king Duff, ſucceeded Culen, and by his wiſe and vigorous adminiſtration rectified the diſorders which had prevailed in the reign of his profligate predeceſſor. The Danes, who in this period brought ſo many calamities on England, did not leave Scotland undiſturbed. For a great army of that nation landed near Montroſe, plundered the open country, and beſieged the town of Perth. Kenneth having collected an army of his ſubjects at Stirling, marched to raiſe the ſiege. This brought on a battle between the two armies, at Loncarty near Perth; in which the Scots were in great danger of being defeated, and had already begun to fly; when they were prevailed upon by the threats, reproaches, and example of a huſbandman, named *Hay*, and his two ſons, to return, and renew the fight; by which they obtained a complete victory. The king, by the

[68] Fordun, l. 4. c. 26. [69] Id. c. 27.

advice

advice of his nobles, rewarded Hay and his ſons (from whom the very ancient and noble family of Errol is ſaid to be deſcended), with a large tract of land in the fertile plains of Gowrie[70]. It is, however, a little ſurpriſing, that Fordun, the moſt ancient Scotch hiſtorian, makes no mention of this Daniſh invaſion, nor of this famous battle of Loncarty. This prince is ſaid to have obtained a formal ceſſion of the country on the north of the Tweed, inhabited by the Engliſh, on condition that he allowed the people of that country to uſe the Engliſh laws and ſpeak the Engliſh language[71]. Kenneth was cut off by a conſpiracy in the twenty-fourth year of his reign, A. D. 994, though the manner and circumſtances of his death are not well known[72]. A. D. 901, to 978.

70 Boeth. Hiſt. l. 11. Buchan. l. 6.
71 J. Wallingford, apud Gale, l. 1. p. 545.
72 Fordun, l. 4. c. 33.

SECTION V.

The civil and military hiſtory of Great Britain, from the acceſſion of Ethelred the Unready, A. D. 978, *to the landing of William duke of Normandy*, A. D. 1066.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

Acceſſion of Ethelred the Unready.

THE reign of Ethelred, ſurnamed *the Unready*, who ſucceeded his brother Edward the Martyr A. D. 978, was one of the moſt calamitous in the Engliſh hiſtory. Theſe calamities, we are aſſured by ſeveral monkiſh hiſtorians, were foretold by their favourite St. Dunſtan at the baptiſm of this prince, and diſcovered in a very extraordinary manner[1].

Deſcents of the Danes on the coaſts of England.

The piratical Danes, who for more than half a century had given the Engliſh very little diſturbance, began again to caſt their rapacious eyes on this country ſoon after the acceſſion of this unfortunate king. Their firſt attempts ſeem to have been made with diffidence, by a ſmall number of adventurers. In the year 981, a few of theſe rovers plundered Southampton; and putting their booty on board their fleet, conſiſting of ſeven ſhips, departed with precipitation[2]. By degrees, theſe deſcents upon the Engliſh

[1] Minxit namque cum baptizaretur in ſacro fonte. Unde vir Domini exterminium Anglorum in tempore ejus futurum prædixit. Hen. Hunt. l. 4. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.

[2] Chron. Saxon. p. 125.

coaſts

coaſts became more frequent and more formi- A.D. 987, to 1066.
dable. In the year 991 an Engliſh army was defeated near Maldon, and their commander duke Brithnot ſlain, by a party of theſe plunderers [3]. Ethelred, inſtead of revenging this affront, followed the cowardly and imprudent advice of Siricius archbiſhop of Canterbury, and gave the victorious Danes a bribe of 10,000 *l.* to depart [4]. This meaſure was productive of conſequences which might eaſily have been foreſeen. Another fleet of Danes appeared upon the Engliſh coaſts the very next year, and put into different ports, in hopes of being bought off in the ſame manner. Ethelred, on this occaſion, called an aſſembly of all the great men, both of the clergy and laity; in which it was reſolved to collect as great a fleet as poſſible at London, in order to block up the Daniſh fleet in ſome harbour. But the ſucceſs of theſe wiſe and vigorous counſels was prevented by the treachery of Ealfric duke of Mercia, one of the commanders of the Engliſh fleet, who warned the Danes of their danger; which gave them an opportunity to eſcape, with the loſs of only one ſhip [5]. Ealfric carried his treachery ſtill further, and deſerted to the Danes, when the Engliſh fleet purſued and engaged them, which prevented their deſtruction.

Hitherto the Daniſh depredations had been conducted only by adventurous chieftains; but Swein, king of Denmark, and

3 Chron. Saxon. p. 125. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.
4 Id. ibid. 5 Chron. Saxon. p. 127.

A.D. 978, to 1066. Olave king of Norway, invade England.

in the year 993 England was invaded by a royal fleet and army, commanded by two kings in perſon, Swein king of Denmark, and Olave king of Norway. Theſe princes ſailed up the Humber, landed their men, and plundered Lindſay; after which they marched into Northumberland; where the people and nobility, being for the moſt part of Daniſh blood, made very little reſiſtance[6]. Having wintered in that country, they embarked in the ſpring, entered the river Thames, and inveſted London, in hopes of haſtening the conqueſt of the kingdom, by the reduction of the capital. But being repulſed in all their aſſaults by the undaunted citizens, they were obliged to raiſe the ſiege, and in revenge waſted all the open country with fire and ſword. Ethelred could think of no better method of putting a ſtop to their depredations, than by offering them the ſum of 16,000 *l.* to deſiſt, and depart the kingdom: which theſe royal ravagers thought proper to accept; and having ſpent the winter quietly at Southampton, returned to their reſpective dominions in the ſpring A. D. 995[7].

Deſcents of the Danes.

The calm occaſioned by the departure of the two kings was of very ſhort duration. For in the years 997 and 998, armies of Danes landed, and made dreadful devaſtations in the ſouth-weſt of England, defeating all the detached parties of the Engliſh which attempted to oppoſe them[8].

[6] Chron. Saxon. p. 127.

[7] Id. p. 128. Hen. Hunt. l. 5. p. 205.

[8] Chron. Saxon. p. 129.

In the year 999 theſe deſtructive ravagers changed the ſcene of action, and ſailing up the Thames and Medway, defeated an army of Kentiſhmen near Rocheſter, and deſolated the adjacent country [9]. Ethelred collected a fleet and raiſed an army this year; but they were both ſo ill conducted, that they ſerved only to exhauſt his treaſures and oppreſs his ſubjects; which obliged him to have recourſe again to the wretched expedient of bribing his enemies, who would accept of no leſs than 24,000*l.* [10] A. D. 978, to 1066.

In order to gain the friendſhip of a nation from whoſe enmity he and his ſubjects had ſuſtained ſo many injuries, Ethelred, being now a widower, demanded in marriage the beautiful Emma, ſiſter to Richard II. duke of Normandy, of Daniſh blood; and that princeſs arriving in England A. D. 1002, the marriage was conſummated [11]. This meaſure might perhaps have been productive of ſalutary conſequences, if another of a contrary tendency had not been ſoon after adopted. This was the maſſacre of the Danes ſettled in England, who are ſaid to have been butchered by the enraged Engliſh, on Sunday November 13, A. D. 1002, without diſtinction of rank, age, or ſex. Among other perſons of diſtinction who were murdered on this fatal day, was Gunilda, ſiſter to Swein king of Denmark, with her huſband and children [12]. Some young Marriage of Ethelred and Emma, and maſſacre of the Danes in England.

[9] Chron. Saxon. p. 131. [10] Id. ibid. R. Hoveden. pars prior.
[11] Hen. Hunt. l. 6. [12] Chron. Saxon. p. 133. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

Danes found means to eſcape from the general ſlaughter of their countrymen in London, and carried the diſmal news to their ſovereign in his own dominions [13]. It is eaſy to imagine what a ſtorm of rage theſe tidings raiſed in the boſom of that ferocious prince; which made him pour forth the moſt direful denunciations of vengeance againſt the Engliſh, and employ the greateſt diligence to carry theſe denunciations into execution. Accordingly, in the ſpring of A. D. 1003, Swein landed in the ſouth-weſt of England with a powerful army, took the city of Exeter, and ſpread deſolation far and near [14].

War between Swein king of Denmark and the Engliſh.

The Engliſh, ſenſible that they could expect no mercy from their fierce enraged enemies, prepared to make a vigorous defence. But the command of the army being imprudently given to Ealfric duke of Mercia, that hoary traitor once more betrayed his truſt; and feigning himſelf ſick when the two armies were on the point of engaging, the Engliſh were ſo diſpirited, that they diſbanded without fighting [15]. Ealfric dying ſoon after, was ſucceeded both in the government of Mercia and the command of the Engliſh army by a ſtill greater traitor. This was the infamous Ædric Streon, who had been raiſed by Ethelred from an inferior ſtation to the higheſt honours of the ſtate, and married to his own ſiſter [16]. This monſter of villany and ingratitude

[13] Ypod. Newſt. p. 427.
[14] Chron. Saxon. p. 133.
[15] Id. ibid. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.
[16] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.

diſco-

diſcovered all the counſels of his ſovereign to the enemy, and, by one means or other, diſappointed every ſcheme that was formed for the defence of his country [17]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Miſeries of the Engliſh.

It would be tedious and unpleaſant to give a minute detail of all the ravages of the Danes, and miſeries of the Engliſh, in this calamitous period, who for ten ſucceſſive years were purſued by a continued ſeries of diſgraces and diſaſters. Exeter, Norwich, Oxford, Cambridge, Canterbury, and many other cities, towns, and villages, were reduced to aſhes, and the greateſt part of their inhabitants buried in their ruins. St. Alphage, archbiſhop of Canterbury, with almoſt all his clergy, were murdered in cold blood. The open country was ſo inſecure that agriculture was neglected, and a famine, no leſs deſtructive than the ſword, enſued. All the fleets and armies that the wretched Engliſh raiſed for their own defence, were, by various ſtratagems, betrayed and ruined by the infamous Ædric and his accomplices. If they ſometimes purchaſed a momentary quiet by large ſums of money, this ſerved only to accelerate their ruin, by weakening themſelves and ſtrengthening their enemies. In a word, Ethelred, deſpairing of being able to preſerve his crown any longer, having ſent his queen and two ſons before him, retired into Normandy A. D. 1013; and about the end of that year the city of London opened her gates

[17] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.

to

A.D. 978, to 1066.

to the victorious Dane, when it might be ſaid that England was completely conquered [18].

Death of Swein king of Denmark, and its conſequences.

Swein, king of Denmark, did not live long to enjoy this important conqueſt, but dying ſuddenly at Gainſborough, February 3, A.D. 1014, before he was crowned, he is not commonly reckoned among the kings of England [19]. This event revived the dejected ſpirits of the Engliſh, and inſpired them with the reſolution of attempting to deliver their country from the Daniſh yoke. In order to this, they ſent a deputation into Normandy to invite king Ethelred to return into England, and reſume the reins of government, promiſing him their moſt cheerful obedience and hearty ſupport. The king complied with this invitation; and having ſent his ſon prince Edward before him, to aſſure the nobility and people that he would avoid all the errors of his former adminiſtration, arrived in the time of Lent, and found a numerous army of his Engliſh ſubjects ready to receive and obey his orders. Ethelred at his firſt arrival acted with uncommon ſpirit; and falling upon the Danes unexpectedly as they were plundering the country about Gainſborough, killed great numbers of them, and obliged the reſt, with their young king Canute, to retire to their ſhips, and put to ſea. Canute, enraged at this defection of the Engliſh, having cruelly mutilated their hoſtages, and ſet them

[18] Chron. Saxon. p. 133—144. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10. p. 39.
[19] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10. p. 40. Chron. Saxon. p. 144.

on

on ſhore at Sandwich, ſailed away to take poſ- A.D. 978, to 1066.
ſeſſion of his native kingdom[20].

King Ethelred did not continue long to act in this commendable manner; but falling again under the influence of his brother-in-law, the infamous Ædric Streon, he was by him miſguided, betrayed, and ruined. That horrid traitor, at an aſſembly of the nobility which met this year at Oxford, invited two of the moſt wealthy and potent earls, Sugfert and Morcar, to an entertainment, where they were cruelly murdered; and their attendants, after making an attempt to revenge their lords, took ſhelter in a church, where they were burnt to death. It ſoon appeared, that Ethelred was privy and conſenting to all theſe baſe and barbarous proceedings, by confiſcating the eſtates of theſe unhappy noblemen, and thruſting the young and beautiful widow of earl Sugfert into a monaſtery. That lady having, at a caſual interview, captivated the heart of prince Edmund, the king's eldeſt ſon, he releaſed her from her confinement, and married her without his father's conſent[21]. By theſe events, the peace of the royal family, and the confidence of the nobility in their king, and in one another, were deſtroyed, at a time when nothing but the moſt cordial union could have preſerved them all from ruin.

Miſconduct of king Ethelred, and treachery of Ædric Streon.

Canute, king of Denmark, having ſettled the affairs of his hereditary dominions, returned about

War between Canute king

[20] Chron. Saxon. p. 145. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.
[21] Chron. Saxon. p. 146.

this

A. D. 978, to 1066. of Denmark and the Engliſh.

this time to aſſert his claim to the crown of England, and preſently over-run Dorſetſhire, Wiltſhire, and Somerſetſhire. King Ethelred being then ſick, his brother-in-law Ædric raiſed one army in Mercia, and his ſon prince Edmund another in the north: but when theſe two armies joined, the prince received intelligence, that the faithleſs Ædric had formed a plot againſt his liberty and life; which obliged him to retire with his forces without fighting the common enemy. Soon after this the traitor Ædric threw off the maſk, and openly joined Canute with forty ſhips of the Engliſh navy, whoſe crews he had corrupted. Canute, ſtrengthened by this acceſſion, advanced into Warwickſhire, having brought all the country behind him to ſubmit to his authority. In the mean time, prince Edmund advanced with a body of troops which he had haſtily collected; but when they found that they were not to be joined by the Lononers, who ſtaid at home to defend their own city, they diſbanded without fighting, in ſpite of all the commands and intreaties of their leader[22]. The intrepid Edmund, not yet diſpirited by all theſe diſappointments, with incredible diligence raiſed a ſecond army, which was joined by the king at the head of the Londoners; but that weak unfortunate prince was ſtill ſurrounded with faithleſs friends, who infuſed into him ſuch doubts and fears of the fidelity of the Engliſh, that he

[22] Chron. Saxon. p. 146, 147.

could

could not be prevailed upon, by the moſt earneſt intreaties of his heroic ſon, to continue in the army, but haſtened back to London. The troops being thus abandoned by their king, could no longer be kept together, but diſbanded a ſecond time; which conſtrained the prince, with a few faithful followers, to retire into the north, and join his brother-in-law Uhtred earl of Northumberland. Canute purſued him in his retreat with a formidable army; which ſoon brought Uhtred to ſubmiſſion, and obliged Edmund to quit the field, and take ſhelter within the walls of London. Here he found his father king Ethelred at the point of death, who expired April 23, A.D. 1016, leaving his family and ſubjects in the moſt diſtreſsful circumſtances [23]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

The brave prince Edmund eldeſt ſon of the deceaſed king, was immediately crowned at London, by Livignus archbiſhop of Canterbury, aſſiſted by a very few of the Engliſh nobility and clergy, amidſt the acclamations of the loyal Londoners. But the far greateſt part of the Engliſh clergy and nobility attended Canute at Southampton, ſwore allegiance to him as their king, and abjured all the poſterity of Ethelred [24]. After theſe ceremonies, both theſe princes prepared to contend for the crown of England with ſuch ſpirit and valour, as ſhewed that neither of them was unworthy of the prize.

23 Chron. Saxon. p. 146, 147. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10. R. Hoveden. Annal. pars prior. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

24 R. Hoveden. Annal. pars prior, p. 249.

King

A. D. 978, to 1066.

War between king Edmund and king Canute.

King Edmund, who from his hardineſs in war had obtained the name of *Ironſide*, immediately after his coronation haſtened into Weſſex, where he had conſiderable influence; and Canute, taking advantage of his abſence, beſieged London. But the bravery of the citizens baffled all his efforts; and Edmund having collected ſome forces, flew to their relief. This obliged Canute to raiſe the ſiege; and the two armies meeting at Gillingham in Dorſetſhire, a battle was fought, in which the Engliſh gained ſome advantage. There never was a more active or bloody campaign in England than this in the year 1016: for in the courſe of it, Canute beſieged London no leſs than three times, and was as often forced to raiſe the ſiege; and no fewer than five pitched battles were fought with prodigious obſtinacy and great effuſion of blood [25].

Pacification between the two kings, and death of king Edmund.

The nobility in both armies dreading the conſequences of a quarrel, which was carried on with ſuch uncommon fury, and ſeemed to threaten the total deſtruction of their country, prevailed upon the two kings to enter upon a treaty, when they were on the point of fighting a ſixth battle. After a ſhort negociation, it was agreed to divide the kingdom between them, allotting to Canute the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumberland, which were chiefly inhabited by Danes, and to Edmund all the reſt of England [26]. The brave king Edmund did not many

[25] Chron. Saxon. p. 147—150. [26] Id. ibid. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10.

days

days ſurvive this agreement, being murdered at Oxford, November 30, by the contrivance, as it was ſuſpected, of the deteſtable traitor Ædric Streon [27]. A. D. 978, to 1066.

The two infant ſons of the brave but unfortunate Edmund, Edwin and Edward, fell into the hands of Canute; who ſent them to his friend the king of Sweden, with a requeſt that they might not live to give him any trouble. Though that prince underſtood the meaning of this requeſt, he was not ſo baſe as to comply with it, but cauſed the two royal victims to be conducted to the court of Solomon king of Hungary, with a requeſt to preſerve and educate them according to their birth. Here Edwin the eldeſt died young; and Edward having married the princeſs Agatha, ſiſter to the queen of Hungary, had one ſon and two daughters, of whom we ſhall hear afterwards [28]. The two ſons of king Edmund preſerved.

After the death of their heroic king Edmund, the Engliſh made no further oppoſition, but quietly ſubmitted to the government of Canute, who was acknowledged king of all England by all the great men both of the clergy and laity, in a general aſſembly held at London A. D. 1017. To give ſome colour of juſtice to the excluſion of Edmund's two ſons and three brothers, it was affirmed by many of the members of this aſſembly (though falſely), that the ſuc- Acceſſion of king Canute.

[27] Hen. Hunt. 6. p. 208.

[28] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 10. ſub fine. R. Hoveden. pars prior, p. 250.

ceſſion

A.D. 978, to 1066.

ceſſion of Canute to the whole kingdom, on the death of Edmund, had been ſtipulated in the late convention between theſe two princes[29]. To ſecure the crown which he had thus acquired, Canute rewarded ſome of his moſt powerful followers, who had contributed moſt to his elevation, with the richeſt governments. Turkill, a great Daniſh chieftain, was made duke of Eaſt-Anglia; Yric, another powerful nobleman of the ſame nation, was made duke of Northumberland; and the traitor Ædric was confirmed in the government of Mercia[30]. To prevent any inſurrection of the Engliſh in favour of Edwi, the full brother of the late king Edmund, who was ſo great a favourite with the common people that he was called the *Ceorls king*, he firſt procured the baniſhment, and afterwards the murder of that prince[31]. Canute was alſo at much pains to extinguiſh national animoſities, and bring about a thorough reconciliation between his Daniſh and Engliſh ſubjects, which he at length accompliſhed[32].

Performs ſome meritorious acts of juſtice.

This politick prince, having, by theſe and the like arts, ſecured his new-acquired dominion, proceeded to do ſome very meritorious acts of juſtice. In the time of the late troubles, ſeveral of the Engliſh nobles had ſhamefully betrayed the cauſe of their king and country. While Canute needed the treaſon he cheriſhed the traitors;

[29] R. Hoveden. Annal. pars prior, p. 250.
[30] Chron. Saxon. p. 151. R. Hoveden. Annal. p. 250.
[31] Id. ibid. [32] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11.

tors; but as ſoon as he found himſelf in the peaceable poſſeſſion of the crown of England, he baniſhed ſome, and put others of them to death, under various pretences[33]. Nor was it long before the arch-traitor Ædric met with the fate which he had ſo often merited: for that ſhameleſs villain having one day in council upbraided king Canute with his great ſervices, particularly with the murder of the late king Edmund, which had made way for him to aſcend the throne of England, the ferocious Dane was ſo enraged at his preſumption, that he commanded him inſtantly to be put to death, as having confeſſed himſelf guilty of murder and treaſon[34]. About the ſame time he diveſted his two dangerous and powerful ſubjects, Turkill duke of Eaſt-Anglia, and Iric duke of Northumberland, of their eſtates and honours, and ſent them into baniſhment; by which the whole kingdom was reduced to a ſtate of perfect ſubjection to his authority[35]. This enabled him to ſend back the greateſt part of his fleet and army into Denmark, retaining only forty ſhips in England[36]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Still further to gain the affections of his Engliſh ſubjects, and prevent their making any attempts in favour of the princes of their ancient royal family, Canute, being now a widower, made propoſals of marriage to the queen-dowager Emma, widow of the late king Ethelred, who King Canute marries queen Emma.

[33] W. Malmſ. l. 2. f. 11.
[34] Id. ibid.
[35] Id. ibid.
[36] Chron. Saxon. p. 151.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

reſided, with her two ſons by that king, Alfred and Edward, in the court of her brother Richard duke of Normandy. That princeſs, dazzled with the luſtre of a crown which ſhe had already worn, accepted of theſe propoſals; and giving her hand to the great enemy of her family, once more aſcended the throne of England A. D. 1017[37]. By this marriage alſo, the artful Dane diſarmed the reſentment of Richard duke of Normandy, who had declared himſelf the protector of the two young princes Alfred and Edward, and threatened to attempt their reſtoration to the throne of their anceſtors.

Canute's voyage into Denmark, and return into England.

By all theſe prudent meaſures, Canute, not unjuſtly called *the Great*, found himſelf ſo firmly ſeated on the throne of England, that he ventured, A. D. 1019, to make a voyage into his native kingdom of Denmark, which was then at war with Sweden, and carried with him a body of Engliſh troops, commanded by earl Godwin. Theſe troops ſoon met with a favourable opportunity of diſplaying their valour, and ſhewing their attachment to their new ſovereign. Being ſtationed neareſt to the enemy's camp, they aſſaulted it in the night, and gained a complete victory, without the leaſt aſſiſtance from the Danes[38]. This brave action greatly endeared the Engliſh in general to the king, and procured Godwin the higheſt marks of the royal favour,

[37] Chron. Saxon. p. 151.

[38] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

and

and laid the foundation of his future greatneſs[39]. Having ſpent about a year in Denmark, and finiſhed the war with Sweden, Canute returned into England A. D. 1020; and found every thing in the moſt profound tranquillity, which continued ſeveral years; and which he ſpent in making good laws, building churches and monaſteries, and in other popular and pious works[40]. A. D. 978, to 1066.

Canute made a proſperous expedition into Norway, A. D. 1028, with a fleet of fifty ſhips, and got poſſeſſion of that kingdom, by expelling the good king Olaus, who had loſt the affections of his ſubjects, by his imprudent zeal, and vain endeavours to reſtrain them from piracy[41]. Canute conquers Norway.

A prince who was ſo great and proſperous, the ſovereign of ſo many kingdoms, could not want flatterers; and ſome of his courtiers, it is ſaid, carried their adulation ſo far as to declare in his preſence, that nothing in nature dared to diſobey his commands. To confound theſe pernicious ſycophants, he ordered his chair to be placed upon the beach near Southampton, one day when the tide was coming in, and ſitting down in it, commanded the waves, with an air of authority, to approach no nearer. But the riſing billows, regardleſs of his commands, advanced with their uſual rapidity, and obliged his majeſty to retire; who turning to his flatterers, Reproves the flattery of his courtiers.

[39] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.
[40] Chron. Saxon. p. 152. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11.
[41] Hen. Hunt. l. 6. R. d. Ducto ad an. 1028. Chron. Mail. p. 155.

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"Learn," ſaid he, "from this example, the "inſignificancy of all human power; and that "the word of God alone is omnipotent[42]." A truth ſufficiently obvious, but not much inculcated by monarchs in the circle of their flatterers.

Canute's journey to Rome.

Though Canute was a wiſe and great prince, he was not ſuperior to that wretched degrading ſuperſtition which reigned in that age of darkneſs in which he lived. Influenced chiefly by this, he made a journey to Rome, A. D. 1031, attended by a numerous and ſplendid train of his nobility, and laviſhed greater ſums of money upon the churches and clergy in that city than any prince had ever done. In return for this pious liberality, he obtained ſome additional privileges to the Engliſh college at Rome,—a ſmall abatement in the price of the palls of the Engliſh archbiſhops,—and, what he valued more than all the reſt, a plenary pardon of all his ſins, and the ſpecial friendſhip of St. Peter[43].

Canute's expedition into Cumberland.

The kings of Scotland had conſtantly refuſed to pay the ignominious tax called *Danegelt* for the province of Cumberland, which they had received from the crown of England. Canute, determined no longer to admit of this refuſal, after his return from Rome, raiſed an army, and marched into the north, A. D. 1031, in order to compel Malcolm king of Scots to pay that

[42] Higden. p. 276. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 232.
[43] Hen. Hunt. l. 6. W Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11.

tax,

tax, or to deprive him of that province. But this quarrel was compromiſed without bloodſhed, by Malcolm's reſigning Cumberland to Duncan, his grandſon and heir, who agreed to pay the demanded tribute [44]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

From this time Canute and all his kingdoms enjoyed a profound peace to the time of his death, which happened at Shaftſbury November 12, A. D. 1035 [45]. He left two ſons, named *Swein* and *Harold*, the former by a concubine, and the latter by his firſt wife; and one ſon, named *Hardicanute*, by queen Emma. This laſt prince ſhould have ſucceeded to the crown of England, if the marriage-ſettlement of his royal parents had been obſerved; but being at a diſtance in Denmark (as Swein was in Norway) at his father's death, and Harold being then in England, he ſtepped into the vacant throne, and ſeized his father's treaſures [46]. He was ſupported in this attempt chiefly by the Danes in the north, and the citizens of London; while the Engliſh in general, with earl Godwin at their head, declared for Hardicanute the ſon of Emma; and the nation was threatened with all the horrors of a civil war. This, however, was prevented by a partition of the kingdom between the two brothers; by which it was agreed, that Harold ſhould keep poſſeſſion of London, and all the country to the north of Death of Canute, and acceſſion of Harold.

[44] Fordun, l. 4. c. 41. [45] Chron. Saxon. p. 154.
[46] Hen. Hunt. l. 6. R. Hoveden. Annal. pars prior.

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the Thames; and that all to the ſouth of that river ſhould be ceded to Hardicanute; whoſe ſhare, till his arrival, ſhould be governed by his mother queen Emma, who fixed her reſidence at Wincheſter[47]. This princeſs, finding herſelf ſo agreeably ſeated, and poſſeſſed of ſo much power, invited Alfred and Edward, her two ſons by king Ethelred, to come to her in England; and theſe princes having lately loſt their uncle and patron Robert Duke of Normandy, at whoſe court they had long reſided, joyfully accepted of this invitation, and came over with a numerous retinue. This journey proved fatal to Alfred, the eldeſt and moſt active of theſe princes. For Harold, ſuſpecting that Alfred deſigned to aſſert his right to the crown of England, earneſtly wiſhed to have him deſtroyed; and in order to accompliſh this, by the advice of earl Godwin (whom he had ſecretly gained to his intereſt), he invited him, with great appearance of cordiality, to his court. As the unhappy unſuſpecting prince was on his way thither, he was intercepted and taken priſoner near Gilford, by earl Godwin and his followers, who put the greateſt part of his attendants to death, with every circumſtance of cruelty[48]. The prince was carried firſt to Gillingham, where his eyes were put out, and afterwards confined in the monaſtery of Ely, where he died[49]. As ſoon as queen Emma

47 Chron. Saxon. p. 154. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

48 R. Hoveden. Annal. Alured. Beverl. l. 8. p. 58.

49 Id. ibid. Lelan. Collectan. vol. 1. p. 241.

and

and prince Edward received intelligence of the deplorable fate of the unfortunate Alfred, they fled out of England; the former to the court of Baldwin earl of Flanders, and the latter into Normandy; and Harold took poſſeſſion of the whole kingdom A. D. 1037. He did not, however, enjoy the fruits of his cruelty and ambition very long; for he died April 14, A. D. 1039[50]. This prince was remarkable for his great agility, and ſwiftneſs in walking and running; which procured him the ſurname of *Harefoot*, by which he is known in hiſtory. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Hardicanute king of Denmark happened to be in Flanders on a viſit to his mother queen Emma, when he received the news of Harold's death, and an invitation from the nobility of England to come and take poſſeſſion of that kingdom[51]. He joyfully complied with this invitation; and arriving at Sandwich a few days before Midſummer, in a fleet of forty ſhips, was received with the loudeſt acclamations by people of all ranks[52]. This joy was not of long duration: for the Engliſh ſoon found that their new king was a ferocious and arbitrary prince, who made his own violent paſſions, and not the laws of reaſon or of his country, the rule of his adminiſtration. His rage againſt his predeceſſor Harold was ſo implacable that he commanded his body to be taken out of the grave, firſt be- Acceſſion of Hardicanute.

50 Chron. Saxon. p. 155. 51 R. Hoveden. Annal.
52 R. Hoveden. Annal. Chron. Saxon. p. 156.

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headed, and then thrown into the Thames; and the great earl Godwin, if we may believe ſome of our ancient hiſtorians, was ſo mean-ſpirited, as to aſſiſt the common hangman in executing theſe commands [53]. This mighty earl, who was unqueſtionably the greateſt and moſt powerful ſubject that ever England beheld, beſides theſe humbling compliances with the tyrant's will, was obliged to employ the interceſſion of all his friends, and the moſt valuable bribes, to obliterate the remembrance of the part he had acted under the former reign; particularly in the affair of prince Alfred's murder. One of theſe bribes diſcovers Godwin's ingenuity, as well as his great wealth. It was a galley of admirable workmanſhip, and beautifully gilded, with a crew of eighty of the handſomeſt young men, magnificently dreſſed, each of them having on each arm a bracelet of gold, weighing ſixteen ounces: while all their ſwords, lances, battle-axes, helmets, and ſhields, glittered with gold and ſilver [54].

Deſtruction of Worceſter, and death of Hardicanute.

Hardicanute forfeited his popularity ſoon after his acceſſion, by impoſing a heavy tax for the payment of his Daniſh fleet and army; which became ſtill more odious by the rigorous manner in which it was collected, and a grievous famine which raged at the ſame time [55]. The people of Worceſter having killed two of the

[53] R. Hoveden. Annal. pars prior, p. 251.
[54] Id. ibid.
[55] Chron. Saxon. p. 156.

collectors

collectors of this tax, in a popular tumult, this tyrant was so enraged, that he gave orders to the earls Leofric, Seward, and Godwin, to destroy that city, and exterminate the inhabitants. The first part of these orders was executed; but the people having got some previous notice, made their escape into an island in the Severn, from whence they afterwards returned, and rebuilt their city[56]. Prince Edward, the only surviving son of king Ethelred and queen Emma, arrived in England from Normandy A. D. 1040, and was kindly received by his uterine brother Hardicanute[57]. Though this king was naturally robust and hardy, as his name imports, he abandoned himself to such excesses in eating and drinking, as impaired his health, and hastened his death, which happened at Lambeth, June 8, A. D. 1041, when he was carousing at the wedding of a Danish nobleman[58]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

The violences of Harold and Hardicanute had rendered the Danish government so disagreeable to the English, that they were transported with joy at the sudden death of this last prince, and unanimously determined to restore the line of their own ancient princes. Edward, surnamed *the Exile*, the son of king Edmund Ironside, was the undoubted heir of that line; but having resided from his infancy in the court of Hungary, he was at so great a distance, and Accession of Edward the Confessor.

56 R. Hoveden. Annal. Simon Dunelm. p. 181.
57 Chron. Saxon. 58 Id. ibid. Hoveden. Annal.

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ſo little known in England, that he was hardly ever thought of on this occaſion; and all men turned their eyes on Edward, the ſon of king Ethelred and queen Emma, who was then in the kingdom. This prince, naturally timid and unambitious, dreading a violent oppoſition from the Danes, was ſtruck with terror, and meditated an eſcape into Normandy; when the great earl Godwin eſpouſed his cauſe, and engaged to raiſe him to the throne, on condition that he married his daughter, and protected him and his family in the poſſeſſion of all their eſtates and honours [59]. Edward having agreed to theſe conditions, was acknowledged as king in an aſſembly of the ſtates at Gillingham, chiefly through the great eloquence, power, and intereſt of earl Godwin [60]. The kingdom was ſo much afflicted at this time by a great famine, and mortality both of men and cattle, that the king's coronation was delayed till the year after, when it was performed at Wincheſter on Eaſterday, by Eadſig archbiſhop of Canterbury [61].

Hokeday.

The Engliſh, in their firſt tranſports of joy at ſeeing a prince of their ancient royal family on the throne, were guilty of ſome outrages againſt the Danes, which obliged ſome of them to abandon the country; but as the bulk of that nation quietly ſubmitted to a revolution which they could not prevent, it was attended

59 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.

60 Id. ibid.

61 Id. ibid.

with very little bloodſhed[62]. The remembrance of this revolution was long preſerved in England, by an anniverſary feſtival called *Hokeday*, on which the common people aſſembled in great crowds, and acted a repreſentation of the inſults and indignities which the Danes ſuffered on this occaſion[63]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Edward, at his acceſſion, finding the crown much impoveriſhed by the profuſe grants of the late kings, made a general revocation of theſe grants; by which he obtained a great acceſſion both of wealth and power[64]. This was indeed a ſevere blow to many families; but as it fell chiefly upon the Danes, they met with little pity and no redreſs. He alſo filled his coffers, and increaſed his revenues, by ſeizing the treaſures, and confiſcating the eſtates, of his mother queen Emma, who, he pretended, had treated him very unkindly in his adverſity[65]. Theſe methods of enriching the crown, however exceptionable in themſelves, became popular, by enabling Edward to take off the odious and ignominious tax called *Danegelt*, under which the Engliſh had groaned ſo long. Edward enriches the crown.

Edward fulfilled his engagements to earl Godwin, by marrying his daughter Edgitha, A. D. 1043[66]. But though this lady was one of the Edward's marriage.

[62] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[63] Spelman. Gloſſ. p. 294.
[64] Leges Edward. Confeſſ. c. 16.
[65] Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 236. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[66] Chron. Saxon. p. 157.

moſt

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moſt amiable and accompliſhed of her ſex both in mind and perſon, it was an unhappy and unfruitful marriage, owing, if we may believe our monkiſh hiſtorians, to a vow of chaſtity which the king had made; for which he is highly commended by thoſe writers, eſteemed a ſaint, and ſurnamed *the Confeſſor*[67].

Normans promoted by Edward.

It was in ſome reſpects a misfortune, and the occaſion of no little trouble both to Edward and his ſubjects, that he had been educated, and had ſpent his youthful years abroad, in the court of Normandy, where he had contracted many friendſhips, and received many favours. It was natural for the companions of his youth to come over to congratulate him on his exaltation to the throne of England, in hopes of ſharing with him in his proſperity, as they had aſſiſted him in his adverſity. In theſe expectations they were not miſtaken: the grateful monarch received them kindly, loaded them with favours, and advanced ſome of them to the moſt honourable ſtations both in church and ſtate. The court of England in a little time was crowded with Normans; who, baſking in the ſunſhine of royal favour, did not behave with that modeſty and ſelf-denial, which prudence would have dictated. In particular, one Robert, a Norman monk, a man of learning and abilities, became the declared favourite of Edward, and was raiſed by

67 Ingulf. Hiſt. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 241.

him

him to the ſee of Canterbury, and the chief direction of all affairs[68]. It is eaſy to imagine, that this ſtate of things was not very agreeable to the Engliſh nobles in general. But earl Godwin, who thought himſelf intitled to the firſt place in the favour and confidence of his ſovereign and ſon-in-law, was enraged beyond meaſure at the archbiſhop and other foreign favourites. A.D. 978; to 1066.

An incident happened A. D. 1050, which blew up theſe ſecret diſcontents into an open flame. Euſtace earl of Bologne, who had married Goda, king Edward's ſiſter, paid a viſit to his brother-in law the king of England; and having finiſhed his buſineſs, ſet out on his return home in September this year[69]. When he arrived at Dover, a quarrel aroſe between the townſmen and his retinue, about their lodgings, in which twenty of the townſmen and nineteen of the earl's people were killed, and many wounded on both ſides. Euſtace, having made his eſcape, with a few followers, haſtened back to court, and gave the king a very unfair repreſentation of what had happened, laying the whole blame on the people of Dover, and demanding ſatisfaction[70]. Edward, believing this repreſentation, was greatly incenſed at the people of Dover, and in a fit of paſſion commanded earl Godwin to raiſe an army, and in- Earl Godwin and his ſons baniſhed.

[68] Ingulf. Hiſt. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.
[69] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[70] Chron. Saxon. p. 163.

flict

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flict exemplary vengeance on that town [71]. The earl, unwilling to be the deſtroyer of thoſe whom it was his duty to protect, declined executing this rigorous and unjuſt command; and propoſed that the people of Dover ſhould be heard before they were puniſhed. This refuſal threw the king into a more violent paſſion; which Godwin diſregarded, and retired from court, to proſecute another buſineſs, which he imagined was of more importance [72]. The Welſh, about this time, had made incurſions into Herefordſhire (of which Swain, Earl Godwin's eldeſt ſon, was governor), and built a fort in it, from which they plundered the country. Godwin and his ſons raiſed an army to expel theſe invaders, and deſtroy their fort. The king in the mean time held a great council of the nobility at Gloceſter; where he was attended by the earls Seward, Leolfric, and the other northern chieftains, with their numerous followers; and having been perſuaded by the Welſh and his foreign favourites, that the army raiſed by Godwin and his ſons was deſigned to act againſt himſelf, he laboured earneſtly to prevail upon the nobility to aſſiſt him with their forces in deſtroying the Godwin family. Earl Godwin and his ſons being informed of theſe hoſtile intentions of the king, determined, though with reluctance, to ſtand upon their defence, and repel

[71] Chron. Saxon. p. 163.
[72] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.

force

force by force, if they were attacked[73]. The Engliſh nobility about the king adviſed him not to puſh matters to extremity, but to call another great council to meet at London in September to determine all theſe differences[74]. All the nobility of the ſouth and north of England attended this council, with their followers, which made a great army. Earl Godwin and his ſons being ſummoned to appear before this aſſembly, to anſwer for their late conduct, demanded hoſtages to be given them for the ſafety of their perſons; which were denied. The council then proceeded to judge them in their abſence, outlawed Swain, the eldeſt ſon of Godwin, and condemned that earl and his other ſons to ſurrender themſelves, or depart the kingdom in five days. Theſe unfortunate noblemen choſe rather to abandon their country, than truſt their perſons in the hands of their enemies. Godwin, with his three ſons, Swain, Gurth, and Toſti, took ſhelter in the court of Baldwin earl of Flanders, whoſe daughter Toſti had married; and Harold and Leofwin, his two other ſons, retired into Ireland[75]. Even the fair and innocent Edgitha, though partner of the throne and bed of Edward, was involved in the ruin of her family, being ſtripped of every thing by her ungenerous huſband, and thruſt into a monaſtery[76]. All the immenſe poſſeſſions of God- A. D. 978, to 1066.

[73] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[74] Id ibid.
[75] Chron. Saxon. p. 164.
[76] W. Malmſ.

win

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win and his ſons were confiſcated, their places of power and truſt beſtowed upon others, chiefly on the Norman favourites; and the greatneſs of this mighty family, ſo late the envy of their fellow-ſubjects, and terror of their ſovereign, ſeemed to be quite ſubverted, and laid in ruins [77].

William duke of Normandy viſits England.

Soon after the baniſhment of earl Godwin and his ſons, when the Norman intereſt was triumphant at the court of England, William duke of Normandy paid a viſit to his couſin king Edward; from whom he received the moſt honourable entertainment, and many rich preſents, in return for the generous protection and ſupport which the duke's family had given him in his adverſity. It was in this viſit that Robert the Norman, archbiſhop of Canterbury, is ſaid to have given William the firſt hint of Edward's intention of making him his ſucceſſor; an intention which was probably ſuggeſted by that prelate [78].

The Godwin family reſtored.

Though earl Godwin and his ſons had been obliged to yield to the torrent, and forſake their country, they were men of too much ſpirit to ſit down quietly, without attempting to revenge the injuries, and repair the loſſes which they had ſuffered. They had ſtill many friends and much treaſure, with which they ſoon procured a fleet in the ports of Flanders, and put to ſea in the beginning of ſummer A. D. 1052, in order to

[77] Chron. Saxon. p. 164.

[78] Wau Hiſt. con. p 448.

invade

invade England. As Edward had expected this, he had provided a ſuperior fleet, with which he prevented their landing in England, and obliged them to put back to Flanders. The royal fleet then returned to Sandwich; and the two Norman earls, Ralph and Oddo, who commanded it, imagining that no further attempts would be made that year, laid up their ſhips and diſmiſſed their ſailors. As ſoon as Godwin received intelligence of this, he put to ſea; and being joined near the iſle of Wight by his ſon Harold, with a fleet of nine ſhips from Ireland, they entered all the harbours on the coaſt, raiſed heavy contributions, and preſſed all the ſhips and ſailors into their ſervice. By theſe means, having collected a great fleet and army, they entered the river Thames, and boldly approached London, where the king lay with his army. Edward, inſtigated by his Norman confidents, for ſome time ſtood firm, and ſeemed determined to riſk a battle; but the Engliſh nobility interpoſing, a negociation was ſet on foot, which ſoon terminated in a peace on theſe conditions:—That earl Godwin, his ſons, and followers, ſhould be reſtored to all their eſtates and honours, and ſhould give hoſtages to the king for their future loyalty;—and that the Norman favourites, who had been the occaſion of all theſe troubles, ſhould leave the kingdom. This peace was confirmed the day after in a great council held at London; in which earl Godwin and his ſons were declared innocent of the crimes with A. D. 978, to 1066.

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which they had been charged, and publicly received into the king's favour. At the ſame time queen Edgitha was reſtored to her liberty and former rank[79]. The obnoxious Normans made their eſcape with great ſecrecy and precipitation, for fear of being torn in pieces by the populace.

Earl Godwin's death.

The great earl Godwin did not long ſurvive to enjoy this happy change in the circumſtances of his affairs and family. He died ſuddenly April 15, A. D. 1053, as he was ſitting at table with the king; and was ſucceeded in his honours and great offices by his eldeſt ſurviving ſon Harold; beſides whom, he left, by his only wife, the lady Githa, daughter of Canute the Great, four other ſons, all poſſeſſed of many eſtates and dignities[80].

Ambition of Harold.

Harold, now at the head of the Godwin family, was not inferior to his father in power and wealth, and ſuperior to him in virtue and abilities. Beholding the throne filled by a childleſs prince, in the decline of life, without any one in the kingdom who had any pretenſions to ſucceed him, the true heir at a great diſtance, and almoſt quite forgotten, he ſoon began to caſt ambitious eyes on the crown; and to ſecure the ſucceſſion to it became the great object of all his deſigns and actions[81]. He paid great court

[79] Chron. Saxon. p. 165—168. R. Hoveden. Annal. Higden, p. 279. Alured. Beverlien. l. 8.

[80] Chron. Saxon. p. 168. See Biographia Britannica, art. Godwin.

[81] Ingulf. Hiſt.

to

to Edward, in hopes of engaging him to appoint him his ſucceſſor; he laboured earneſtly to add to the number of his friends, and increaſe his treaſures, ſometimes by means not very honourable[82]. He gained great credit ſoon after his father's death by a ſucceſsful expedition into Wales[83]. Some events happened not long after which ſeemed to favour the views and encourage the hopes of Harold. Seward earl of Northumberland, and Leofric earl of Mercia, who were the moſt powerful noblemen in England, and might have formed a dangerous oppoſition to his elevation to the throne, were both removed by death, A. D. 1055, and Harold obtained the earldom of Northumberland for his brother Toſti, and that of Eaſt-Anglia for himſelf; by which means about two thirds of all England came under the dominion of his family[84]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Though Edward was not ignorant of the ambitious views of Harold, and did not favour them; yet he knew not how to take any effectual meaſures for their diſappointment. Sometimes he inclined to nominate William duke of Normandy his ſucceſſor, as one who would be moſt able to diſpute the throne with Harold. At other times he was diſpoſed to recall his nephew price Edward, ſon of king Edmund Ironſide, whoſe title was unqueſtionable, in hopes that the Engliſh would unite in ſupporting the Prince Edward comes from Hungary into England, and dies ſoon after.

[82] Hen. Hunt. l. 6.
[83] Simon Dunelm.
[84] Chron. Saxon. p. 169. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

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line of their ancient kings. After much balancing, he embraced this laſt meaſure as moſt juſt and honourable, and diſpatched Aldred biſhop of Worceſter to the court of Hungary, to conduct Edward and his family into England. That unfortunate prince arrived in his native country, A.D. 1057, after he had lived about forty years in exile, and died within leſs than a month after his arrival; leaving an infant ſon, named *Edgar Atheling*; and two daughters, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Chriſtina, who became a nun[85]. The hopes of Harold, which had been a little damped by the arrival of prince Edward, were revived again by his death, and the tender age and unpromiſing genius of his ſon.

Voyage of earl Harold into Normandy.

There was one obſtacle in Harold's way to the throne which it ſeemed difficult to remove. Ulnoth, one of his brothers, and a nephew named *Haquin*, had been given to Edward as hoſtages at the late pacification, who had ſent them to William duke of Normandy, where they were ſtill detained[86]. Harold often importuned the king for the releaſe of theſe precious pledges: and at laſt obtained a commiſſion, according to ſome of our hiſtorians, to make a voyage into Normandy to procure their freedom; though other hiſtorians aſſign other reaſons

[85] Chron. Saxon. p. 169. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[86] Id. ibid.

for

for this voyage[87]. However this may be, he set out with a numerous and ſplendid retinue; and after meeting with ſome diſaſters, arrived at the court of Normandy. William was not ignorant of the mighty power of Harold, and ſtrongly ſuſpected his ambitious views; and was therefore in ſome doubt whether he ſhould deſtroy him as a rival, or gain him for a friend. Embracing this laſt counſel, he entertained him in the moſt friendly manner, made him many valuable preſents, and ſtill greater promiſes, if he would aſſiſt him in mounting the throne of England on the demiſe of Edward. Harold, ſeeing himſelf in the hands of his rival, promiſed every thing that was deſired, and even confirmed his promſies with the moſt ſolemn oaths. William, to attach him ſtill more firmly to his intereſts, engaged to load him with additional honours, and to give him his own daughter in marriage. At his departure, he gave him up the youngeſt of the hoſtages, and promiſed to ſend the other[88]. This is the moſt plauſible account of this ſtrange affair; but it muſt be confeſſed, that it is far from being ſatisfactory; and there ſeems to be ſome ſecret in this tranſaction, which none of our hiſtorians have penetrated. One thing, however, is certain, that Harold was no ſooner out of William's reach, than he totally diſregarded all his

A.D. 978, to 1066.

[87] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Hoveden. Annal. Brompt. p. 947. Higden. l. 6. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

[88] Id. ibid.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

promiſes and oaths, and proceeded with redoubled ardour to ſecure his own ſucceſſion to the throne of England.

Expedition of earl Harold into Wales.

The Welſh having renewed their incurſions A. D. 1064, under their enterpriſing prince Griffith, Harold, in conjunction with his brother Toſti, earl of Northumberland, invaded Wales both by ſea and land. This invaſion was planned with ſo much prudence, and proſecuted with ſo much vigour, that the Welſh, to preſerve themſelves from that deſtruction with which they were threatened, ſeized their own prince, who had been the occaſion of the war, cut off his head, and ſent it to Harold, with an offer to ſubmit to the government of any perſon he ſhould think proper to appoint [89]. By this action, ſo honourable and advantageous to his country, Harold's reputation and popularity were very much increaſed.

Earl Toſti expelled.

Though Toſti, earl of Northumberland, had done good ſervice in the late expedition into Wales, and on ſome other occaſions, he was a man of violent paſſions, and had been guilty of many acts of cruelty and oppreſſion in his government; and the Northumbrians, finding no end or redreſs of their grievances, broke out into open rebellion againſt him, killed about two hundred of his retainers, the inſtruments of his oppreſſions, ſeized his treaſures, and drove him out of their country A. D. 1064. The expelled

89 Chron. Saxon. p. 170. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

earl

earl haſtened to the king, and made loud complaints of the injury which he had received; and Edward, too haſtily believing the juſtice of theſe complaints, commanded Harold to raiſe an army, reſtore his brother to his government, and puniſh the Northumbrians, who had choſen Morcar, the ſon of Alfgar duke of Mercia, for their earl. When Harold approached the borders of Northumberland with his army, he was met by a deputation from the inſurgents, who gave him a detail of the many cruelties and oppreſſions of which their late earl had been guilty; and repreſented, in a firm tone, that though they were willing to ſubmit to legal government, they were determined to die with their ſwords in their hands, rather than ſuffer his reſtoration. Harold, convinced of the juſtice of their repreſentations, abandoned his brother's cauſe, prevailed with the king to pardon the Northumbrians, and confirm Morcar in the earldom. Toſti, deſpairing of his reſtoration to his government, and enraged beyond meaſure at the conduct of his brother Harold, retired to the court of Baldwin earl of Flanders, his father-in-law [90]. A. D. 978, to 1066.

Harold married.

Harold, ſoon after this tranſaction, procured the government of Mercia for Edwin, earl Morcar's brother, and alſo married Edgiva, the ſiſter of theſe two noblemen. By theſe juſt and prudent meaſures, he gained the hearts of the people

[90] Chron. Saxon. p. 171. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

of Mercia and Northumberland, and attached the two powerful earls Edwin and Morcar moſt firmly to his intereſt [91].

Death of Edward the Confeſſor, and acceſſion of Harold.

When Harold was thus in the zenith of his power and popularity, the throne became vacant by the death of Edward the Confeſſor, January 5, A. D. 1066. On the very next day he was buried with great ſolemnity, in his new church of St. Peter's Weſtminſter, all the members of a great council which he had ſummoned for the dedication of that church attending his funeral [92]. On that ſame buſy day, earl Harold was crowned king of England in St. Paul's, by Aldred archbiſhop of York, with as much quiet and unanimity, as if his title to the crown had been as clear and indiſputable as it was defective [93]. He alleged, indeed, that the late king had appointed him his ſucceſſor; but of this he was never able to produce ſufficient evidence [94]. The truth is, that Harold owed his elevation to the throne to his own great power and wealth, his intimate connections with the chief nobility, the favour of the clergy, the love of the citizens of London, and his general popularity. This popularity was ſo great, that though Edgar Atheling, the undoubted heir of the crown, was on the ſpot, his name was hardly mentioned on this occaſion [95].

[91] Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

[92] Chron. Saxon. p. 171. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Hen. Hunt. l. 6. Hoveden. Annal. Inguſf. Hiſt.

[93] Id. ibid.

[94] Hoveden. Annal. Alured. Beverl. l. 8. p. 122.

[95] Chron. Saxon. p. 172. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. ſub. fine.

Harold endeavoured to ſecure his crown by the ſame popular arts by which he had obtained it; and his adminiſtration is acknowledged to have been wiſe, and juſt, and gracious[96]. He was not ſo weak as to expect the peaceable enjoyment of the glittering price which he had obtained; for though he ſeems to have been under no apprehenſions from the young, weak, and friendleſs Edgar, he was not ſo eaſy with reſpect to his own brother Toſti, and the duke of Normandy, knowing the implacable reſentment of the one, and the power and ambition of the other. It was therefore one of his firſt cares to provide a fleet and army to defend himſelf againſt theſe dangerous enemies. It was not long before ambaſſadors arrived from the duke of Normandy, who reproached Harold, in their maſter's name, for the breach of his oath; and required him, in a peremptory tone, to deſcend from that throne which he had uſurped. To which Harold returned this firm and prudent anſwer, That his oath was both unlawful and involuntary, and therefore not binding; and that he was determined to defend the throne to which he had been raiſed by the unanimous ſuffrage of the nobility, clergy, and people[97]. William, on receiving this anſwer, haſtened his preparations for an invaſion of England, in order to obtain by force what he could not obtain by negociation.

A. D. 978, to 1066.

His endeavours to preſerve his crown.

[96] Alured. Beverl. l. 8. p. 122. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[97] Id. ibid. l. 3. Ingulf. Hiſt.

The

A. D. 978, to 1066.

Attempts to dethrone Harold defeated.

The baniſhed earl of Northumberland was almoſt frantic with rage and envy when he heard of his brother's elevation to the throne of England. He flew to the duke of Normandy, who had married Matilda, his wife's ſiſter, and urged him to haſten his preparations for pulling down their common enemy[98]. He ſent meſſengers into Denmark and Norway, to rouſe the piratical adventurers of thoſe countries to renew their incurſions; and impatient to be in action, he collected a ſmall fleet in the ports of Flanders, with which he ſailed towards England about the beginning of May, and attempted to make deſcents on ſeveral parts of the coaſts, but was every where repulſed with loſs[99]. Upon this ill ſucceſs, being deſerted by many of his ſailors, he retired into Scotland, and earneſtly ſolicited Malcolm king of Scots to eſpouſe his quarrel; but in vain[100]. His meſſengers had been more ſucceſsful in Norway, and had engaged Harold Harfagar, king of that country, to invade England with his whole force; and that prince approaching the Northumbrian coaſt about the beginning of September, with a fleet of three hundred ſhips, was joined by Toſti with his fleet from Scotland. Theſe two commanders entered the Humber, landed their forces, and advanced towards York; near which city they were encountered, September 19, by the two earls Edwin

[98] Order. Vital. p. 492.

[99] Chron. Saxon. p. 172. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13. Hoveden. Annal.

[100] Id. ibid.

and

and Morcar. The conflict was at firſt bloody, and the victory for ſome time doubtful; but at length the earls were defeated, and the city of York ſurrendered to the conquerors. But their triumph was of very ſhort duration; for king Harold having received intelligence of this invaſion, marched his army with great expedition into the north, and came up with the enemy September 24, near Stanford-bridge; where he obtained a complete victory, killed both Earl Toſti and the king of Norway, cut almoſt their whole army in pieces, took all their ſpoils, and ſuffered only twenty ſhips of their whole fleet to eſcape [101]. A. D. 978, to 1066.

By this great victory, Harold was delivered from two of his moſt dangerous enemies, crowned with laurels, and loaden with ſpoils. But this year (the moſt important and eventful in the annals of England) was big with the moſt ſudden and mighty reverſes of fortune that are to be found in hiſtory. While Harold was celebrating his victory at York, he received intelligence, that William duke of Normandy had landed at Pevenſy in Suſſex, on September 25, at the head of an army of 60,000 men; which ſoon after deprived him of his crown and life, and brought about another great revolution which will be the ſubject of the third book of this work [102]. Landing of William duke of Normandy.

[101] Hoveden. Annal. Chron. Saxon. p. 172. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 13.

[102] Chron. Saxon. p. 174. W. Malmſ. l. 3. Hen. Hunt. l. 7.

It

A.D. 978, to 1066.

It is now neceſſary to give a very brief deduction of the civil and military affairs of Wales and Scotland, from A. D. 978 to 1066.

At the beginning of this period, Owen ap Howel Dha was prince of South Wales, and Howel ap Iwaf prince of North Wales [103]. Eneon, the eldeſt ſon of Owen, who was an excellent prince, loſt his life A. D. 983, in attempting to ſuppreſs an inſurrection in Guentland, leaving two ſons, Edwin and Theodore; and the year after, Howel was ſlain in making an incurſion into England, and ſucceeded by his brother Cadwallon in the principality of North Wales [104]. Cadwallon defeated and killed his couſin Ionaval, the ſon of his eldeſt brother Meyric, and right heir to the principality; but was himſelf defeated and ſlain the year after by Meredyth ap Owen, who thereby got poſſeſſion of North Wales. Owen prince of South Wales dying A. D. 987, his youngeſt ſon Meredyth, who had conquered North Wales, ſeized alſo South Wales, excluding his two nephews, Edwin and Theodore, the ſons of his elder brother Eneon. As Meredyth was an uſurper of North Wales from Edwal ap Meyric, and of South Wales from Edwin ap Eneon, his reign was one continued ſcene of war and confuſion; and the Danes taking advantage of theſe inteſtine broils, obliged him to pay a tribute of one penny for every man in Wales [105],

[103] Powel, Hiſt. Wales, p. 65. [104] Id. p. 67.
[105] Id. p. 70.

which

which was called *the tribute of the black army*[106]. Meredith, after a turbulent and unhappy reign, died A. D. 998, leaving only one daughter, named *Angarad*, who married Lhewelyn ap Sitſylht, a nobleman deſcended by his mother from the ancient princes of North Wales. A.D. 978, to 1066.

The death of prince Meredith without male iſſue, and the infancy of Iago, the ſon of Edwal, occaſioned freſh diſputes about the ſucceſſion. At length an adventurer, named *Acdan ap Blegored*, whoſe birth was ſo obſcure, that even the Welſh genealogiſts cannot inform us who was his grandfather, triumphed over all his rivals, and became prince of North Wales A. D. 1003, and kept poſſeſſion of it to A. D. 1015, when he was ſlain in battle with his four ſons, by Lhewelyn ap Sitſylht[107]. Wales enjoyed great proſperity under the government of Lhewelyn. "The earth brought forth double; the people "proſpered in all their affairs, and multiplied "wonderfully; the cattle increaſed in great "number; ſo that there was neither beggar nor "poor man from the ſouth to the north ſea[108]." This prince was ſlain in battle A. D. 1021, by Howel ap Edwin ap Eneon ap Owen ap Howel Dha, the right heir of the principality of South Wales. Though Lhewelyn left a ſon named *Gryffyth*, he was ſucceeded in the government of North Wales by Iago ap Edwal ap Meyric ap

[106] Powel, Hiſt. Wales, p. 71. [107] Id. p. 83.
[108] Id. p. 84.

Edwal

A.D. 978, to 1066. Edwal Voel, the right heir of that principality [109]. The government of South Wales was long diſputed between Howel, the right heir, and an uſurper named *Rythereh ap Ieſtyn*, who fell in battle A. D. 1032; by which Howel obtained poſſeſſion of the territories of his anceſtors [110]. Gryffyth, the ſon of Lhewelyn late prince of North Wales, was very young when his father was killed; but as ſoon as he arrived at the manly age, he collected an army of adventurers, and the friends of his family, A. D. 1037; with which he defeated and killed Iago ap Edwal, and got poſſeſſion of North Wales; to which he ſoon after added South Wales, by the expulſion of its prince Howel [111]. This Gryffyth ap Lhewelyn prince of all Wales was one of the braveſt princes that ever reigned in that country. He not only defended his own dominions againſt all his enemies with undaunted courage, but he made frequent incurſions into England. In one of theſe, A. D. 1055, he firſt plundered, and then burnt Hereford, and carried away many captives and much ſpoil [112]. At length the inroads of this bold invader became ſo frequent and deſtructive, that Harold, who aſpired to the crown of England, thought he could do nothing more popular than to put an effectual ſtop to them; which he accompliſhed in the manner above related [113]. After the death of Gryffyth,

109 Powel, Hiſt. Wales, 87. 110 Id. ibid. 111 Id. p. 91.
112 Id. p. 979. Simon Dunelm. R. Hoveden. Annal.
113 See p. 150.

king

king Edward to whom the Welſh had yielded the nomination of their prince, appointed Blethyn and Rywalhan, the ſons of the princeſs Angharat, and uterine brothers to Gryffyth, to be governors or princes of North Wales; while Meredyth ap Owen ap Edwin was, by the ſame authority, appointed prince of South Wales; and theſe three were princes of Wales when William duke of Normandy landed with his army in England, A. D. 1066 [114]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

It cannot be denied by any unprejudiced friend of truth, that the hiſtory of Scotland, in this period, is very dark and doubtful;—that many of the narratives of its modern writers are not ſupported by ſufficient evidence, and will hardly bear a critical inveſtigation. This darkneſs and uncertainty is owing to various cauſes; but chiefly to the loſs of records, chronicles, and other hiſtorical monuments in the long and cruel wars between the Scotch and Engliſh in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and to the too haſty deſtruction of monaſteries, and their libraries, at the Reformation [115]. A few fragments, which bear the marks of genuine antiquity, have eſcaped the general wreck, and yield a little light, which becomes gradually more clear as we approach the concluſion of this period [116]. Hiſtory of Scotland.

Though Kenneth II. at his death, A. D. 994, left a ſon named *Malcolm*, prince of Cumberland, he was ſucceeded in the throne of Scotland by Conſtantine.

[114] Powel's Hiſt. p. 103.

[115] See Innes's Critical Eſſays, p. 552—586.

[116] Id. in Append.

Con-

A.D. 978, to 1066. Conſtantine, the ſon of Culen, his immediate predeceſſor, according to the frequent cuſtom of thoſe times [117]. This was the occaſion of a civil war between Malcolm and Conſtantine; in the courſe of which the latter was ſlain in a battle which was fought at Cramond A. D. 996 [118].

Grime. But Malcolm, who was not preſent in this battle, did not reap any advantage from this victory. For Grime, the ſon of the late king Duff, collecting the ſcattered remains of Conſtantine's army, haſtened to Scone, and was there advanced to the throne by his followers. Malcolm, who was then in Cumberland, was much provoked at this ſecond excluſion from his father's throne, and proſecuted the war with ſo much fury, that the unhappy country was threatened with deſtruction. To prevent this, Fothad, a pious and much reſpected biſhop, interpoſed, and laboured to bring about a peace; which he at length accompliſhed on theſe terms: "That "Grime ſhould enjoy the kingdom for his life; "and that Malcolm ſhould ſucceed him; and "that from thenceforward the rule of ſucceſſion "eſtabliſhed by the late king Kenneth, viz. that "a father ſhould be ſucceeded by his ſon, rather "than by his nephew, ſhould be inviolably "obſerved [119]." After this peace had continued about eight years, the war was rekindled; and Grime being mortally wounded in a battle on

[117] Fordun, l. 4. c. 34. Chron. Mailroſ. A. D. 994.
[118] Id. ibid. Buchan. l. 6. [119] Id. ibid.

Aſcen-

Aſcenſion-day A. D. 1004, died the day after, and was ſucceeded by Malcolm, with the conſent of all parties [120]. A.D. 978, to 1066.

Malcolm II. while he was prince of Cumberland, never would conſent to pay the ignominious tax of Danegelt, which involved him in continual quarrels with the Danes. They even purſued him into his new dominions, after his acceſſion to the throne of Scotland; but were defeated by an army commanded by his grandſon Duncan. Provoked at this defeat, they infeſted the coaſts of Scotland for ſome years with frequent deſcents, fought ſeveral battles, with various ſucceſs, and at length gained ſome footing in the countries of Moray and Buchan; but were ſoon after forced to evacuate theſe countries, with a promiſe never to return [121]. After the departure of theſe unwelcome gueſts, Scotland enjoyed a profound peace for about twenty years: a thing not very common in thoſe turbulent unſettled times. Malcolm II.

King Malcolm II. if we may believe ſome hiſtorians, was a prince of the moſt unbounded liberality, and gave away all the crown-lands to his nobility as a reward for their bravery againſt the Danes; reſerving no property to himſelf and his ſucceſſors but the Mute-hill of Scone [122]. But this is both incredible in itſelf, and contradicted by the ſubſequent narrations of theſe very Fabulous ſtory.

[120] Buchan. l. 6. Fordun, l. 4. c. 40.
[121] Boeth. l. 2. Buchan. l. 6.
[122] See Maitland's Hiſt. Scotl. vol. 1. p. 319. Fordun, l. 4. c. 43.

A.D. 978, to 1066. writers, who tell us of biſhopricks erected, monaſteries built, and endowed with many lands, by this king (after he is ſuppoſed to have denuded himſelf of all his poſſeſſions), and by his immediate ſucceſſors. Malcolm was ſurpriſed and ſlain by ſome conſpirators in the caſtle of Glamis, A. D. 1034, in the eightieth year of his life, and the thirtieth of his reign [123].

Duncan. Duncan prince of Cumberland, ſon to Beatrix, the eldeſt daughter of king Malcolm, and Crynyn Abthane of the iſles, ſucceeded his grandfather in the throne of Scotland. The beginning of this prince's reign was diſturbed by an inſurrection, raiſed chiefly by one Macdowal a powerful chieftain of the weſtern iſles, aſſiſted by many adventurers from Ireland, and the neighbouring coaſts of Scotland, where they committed great ravages. But theſe inſurgents were defeated, and almoſt all cut in pieces, by Bancho thane of Lochaber, and Macbeth the king's couſin, ſon of Doaca, the late king Malcolm's youngeſt daughter, and Finele thane of Angus [124]. Soon after the ſuppreſſion of this inſurrection, Swein king of Norway invaded Scotland with a great fleet and army, and defeated Duncan in a bloody battle near Culroſs, who retired with the remains of his army to Perth; which was immediately inveſted by the victors. The Scots being hard preſſed, propoſed an accommodation; and while the conditions of it were negociating, ſent a pre-

[123] Fordun, l. 4. c. 41. [124] Buchanan, l. 7.

ſent

ſent of proviſions, and great quantities of liquors, to the king of Norway and his army. This proved to them, as it was intended, a fatal preſent; for drinking plentifully, according to their cuſtom, they were not only intoxicated, but thrown into a profound ſleep, by the ſomniferous quality of the liquor, in which nightſhade had been infuſed. When the Norwegians were in this condition, the Scots ſallied out, cut the greateſt part of them in pieces; and king Swein being carried to his ſhips in a ſtate of inſenſibility by ſome of his attendants, was preſerved with great difficulty [125]. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that Fordun, the moſt ancient Scotch hiſtorian, makes no mention, either of the above rebellion or invaſion; but expreſsly affirms, that Scotland enjoyed a profound peace, both from foreign and domeſtic enemies, during the whole reign of king Duncan [126]. However this may be, it is univerſally acknowledged, that Duncan was a juſt and good prince, but of too mild and gentle a ſpirit for the times in which he lived. This encouraged his bold ambitious couſin Macbeth to form a plot for depriving him of his crown and life; which he executed at Inverneſs, A. D. 1040; and was immediately after crowned king of Scotland by his followers, to the excluſion of Malcolm Canmore prince of Cumberland, and Donald Bane, the two ſons of the murdered king [127].

A. D. 978, to 1066.

[125] Boet. l. 2. Buchan. l. 7. [126] Fordun, l. 4. c. 44.
[127] Id. c. 44, 45. Boet. l. 12. Buch. l. 7

A.D. 978, to 1066. Macbeth.

Theſe two young princes, having heard of their father's death, raiſed ſome forces to avenge his murder, and aſſert their own rights; but finding themſelves too weak to contend with the uſurper, they left the kingdom to preſerve their lives. Malcolm retired into his principality of Cumberland, and Donald into the weſtern iſles [128]. Macbeth being now in the peaceable poſſeſſion of the throne, endeavoured to ſecure it, by a juſt and popular adminiſtration, protecting his ſubjects from the lawleſs violence of robbers, and the oppreſſions of the nobility. By theſe means the firſt ten years of his reign were very happy, being undiſturbed, either by inteſtine commotions or foreign invaſions. By degrees, however, Macbeth departed from this wiſe and juſt courſe of government, and degenerated into a ſuſpicious and cruel tyrant. Becoming jealous of Bancho thane of Lochaber, who had been the chief inſtrument of his elevation to the throne, he invited him, with his ſon Fleance, to an entertainment, and appointed certain aſſaſſins to kill them both in their return home; by whom Bancho was actually ſlain, and Fleance made his eſcape with great difficulty [129]. Several noblemen, who were ſecretly in the intereſt of Malcolm prince of Cumberland, hearing of the fate of Bancho, abandoned their country, and retired into the territories of that prince, for their own preſervation. Macduff thane of

[128] Buchan. l. 7.

[129] Boet. l. 2, Buchan. l. 7.

Fife

Fife was one of theſe fugitives, who retired with ſo much precipitation, that he left his wife and children behind him, who were all put to death by Macbeth, and his eſtate confiſcated [130]. Theſe exiles, and particularly Macduff, earneſtly intreated Malcolm to raiſe an army, and invade Scotland, in order to vindicate his own right and theirs, and to take vengeance on the tyrant for their common injuries. The prince, after ſome heſitation, complied with their intreaties; and having obtained a conſiderable aid from Edward the Confeſſor, king of England, commanded by the famous Seward earl of Northumberland, he entered Scotland at the head of a powerful army, A. D. 1054 [131]. Macbeth, who was a brave and warlike prince, was not wanting to himſelf on this occaſion; but raiſing all his forces, encountered the invaders in ſeveral actions; in one of which earl Seward loſt his eldeſt ſon, a young nobleman of great hopes [132]. By degrees, all the low countries ſubmitted to Malcolm, and Macbeth retired into the highlands, truſting much to the difficulty of the country and the ſtrength of his caſtle of Dunſinnan. Near this place a deciſive battle was fought, A. D. 1057; in which Macbeth was defeated, and ſlain by the hands of Macduff, and the greateſt part of his army cut in pieces [133]. A few of Macbeth's moſt zealous

A. D. 978, to 1066.

130 Fordun, l. 4. c. 46.
131 Id. l. 5. c. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. R. Hoveden. Annal.
132 Id. ibid. Hen. Hunt. l. 6.
133 Fordun, l. 5. c. 7. Boet. l. 12. Buchan l. 7.

A.D. 978, to 1066.

partiſans, who eſcaped from this battle, deſpairing of mercy from the conqueror, proclaimed Lulah, the ſon of the late uſurper, king. But Lulah, who was a weak prince, was defeated and ſlain at in Strathbolgie, about four months after the battle of Dunſinnan [134]. Upon this all Scotland ſubmitted with joy to Malcolm, who was crowned at Scone, amidſt the acclamations of an infinite multitude of people of all ranks. This prince, who was ſurnamed *Canmore*, or *Great Head*, filled the throne of Scotland when William duke of Normandy landed with his army in England, A. D. 1066; and therefore the events of his reign fall more properly to be related in the firſt chapter of the third book of this work.

[134] *Fordun*, l. 5. c. 8.

THE

HISTORY

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

BOOK II.

CHAP. II.

The hiſtory of Religion in Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, *to the landing of William duke of Normandy,* A. D. 1066.

THE arrival of the Saxons in Britain was as fatal to the ſacred as to the ſecular intereſts of thoſe who invited them; and it brought about as great a revolution in the religious as in the civil ſtate of this iſland. For the Saxons, who came over under Hengiſt and Horſa, and thoſe who followed them at different times, and under different leaders, being all Heathens and idolaters, extirpated the Chriſtian religion, with its profeſſors, wherever their arms prevailed, and introduced their own abſurd and impious ſuperſtitions in its place. At length, however, theſe

Plan of this chapter.

Pagan invaders were by degrees converted to Chriſtianity, and from thenceforward joined with the other inhabitants of this iſland in the profeſſion of that holy religion. In order, therefore, to give our readers a diſtinct view of the ſtate of religion in Britain during this long period, it will be neceſſary to lay before them,—1. A very brief delineation of the religion of the Anglo-Saxons while they continued Heathens, and of the ſtate of the Britiſh churches in thoſe unhappy times;—2. An account of the converſion of the ſeveral ſtates of the heptarchy to the Chriſtian religion;—and, 3. The church hiſtory of all the nations of Britain, from the converſion of the Saxons to the landing of the Normans.

SECTION I.

The hiſtory and delineation of the Religion of the Heathen Saxons, from their arrival in Britain, A. D. 449, *to the coming of Auſtin for their converſion,* A. D. 596, *with a brief account of the ſtate of the Chriſtian churches in Britain in that period.*

Cent. V.

Plan of this ſection.

AS the Anglo-Saxons, who ſettled in Britain in the fifth and ſixth centuries, came from the north-weſt corner of Germany, contiguous to Denmark, we have reaſon to believe that their religion was the ſame, or very nearly the ſame, with that of the Pagan Danes. In delineating the

the Pagan religion of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes, we ſhall give a very brief account, of its prieſts, who taught its principles, and performed its ſacred rites; of the religious principles which they taught; of the deities whom they worſhipped; of the various acts of worſhip which they paid to theſe deities, with their times, places, and other circumſtances. This was the order obſerved in deſcribing the Druidiſm of the ancient Britons [1]; and there is no reaſon to deviate from it on this occaſion. Cent. V.

It muſt be confeſſed, that it is impoſſible to give ſo ſatisfactory an account of the Saxon and Daniſh prieſts as we did of the Britiſh Druids; becauſe thoſe prieſts were almoſt quite unknown to the Greek and Roman writers. Julius Cæſar poſitively affirms, "That the Germans had no "Druids to preſide over the rites of their reli-"gion [2]." By this he cannot mean, that the Germans had no prieſts, but only that their prieſts were not called Druids, and were not in all reſpects the ſame with thoſe of the Gauls and Britons. This aſſertion of Cæſar hath indeed been called in queſtion by ſeveral modern authors; but the poſitive teſtimony of ſuch a writer as Cæſar, who had ſo good an opportunity of knowing the truth of what he teſtified, is more to be regarded than the vague conjectures of a thouſand moderns [3]. Though Tacitus frequently Anglo-Saxon and Daniſh prieſts.

[1] See vol. 1. p. 135. [2] Cæſar de Bel. Gal. l. 6.
[3] Elius Shedius, p. 254. Frikius, p. 44. Keyſler, p. 378.

mentions

Cent. V.

mentions the prieſts of the ancient Germans, he never calls them Druids, as he doth thoſe of the ancient Britons; and Cluverius, one of the moſt learned of the German antiquaries, confeſſeth, that he had not been able to diſcover the name of thoſe prieſts [4]. The conjectures of the two learned authors mentioned below, concerning this matter, are not ſupported by ſufficient evidence [5].

Their hierarchy.

We know not, with any certainty, what were the different degrees and orders in the hierarchy of the Saxon and Daniſh prieſts, or whether, like the Druids, they were divided into ſeveral claſſes, which performed diſtinct parts in their religious rites. In a celebrated temple of Odin, or Wodin, the chief deity of both theſe nations, it is ſaid, there were twelve Drottes of ſuperior dignity, who preſided over all the affairs of religion, and governed all the other prieſts [6]. There was one who bore the name, and exerciſed the office, of the chief prieſt in the kingdom of Northumberland, and probably in each of the other kingdoms of the heptarchy [7].

4 Tacit. Annal. l. 14. c. 30. Cluver. German. Antiq. p. 166.

5 Mr. Mallet, in his Introduction to the Hiſtory of Denmark, c. 4. conjectures, that the Heathen prieſts among the Danes were called *Drottes*, and that there is ſome affinity between *Drottes* and *Druids*. But the etymologies of theſe two words are totally different. Dr. Macpherſon, Diſſertat. 19. thinks that *Coiffi* was the name of the prieſts among the Heathen Saxons; but it ſeems rather to be the proper name of a particular perſon.

6 Mallet, Introduc. Hiſt. Denmark, c. 7. Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 13.

7 Mallet, ibid. c. 7.

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The prieſthood among the Danes and Saxons, as among many other ancient nations, was confined to certain families, and deſcended from father to ſon [8]. The Heathen Danes and Saxons had alſo prieſteſſes, who officiated in the temples of their female deities; and Frigga, their chief goddeſs, was ſerved by kings daughters and ladies of the higheſt ranks [9]. Cent. V.

The Germans, as we are aſſured by Cæſar, were not ſuch bigots as the Gauls and Britons, but rather a little lukewarm in religious matters; and in conſequence of this, their prieſts did not enjoy ſo many honours, nor accumulate ſo much wealth, as the Druids [10]. We hear nothing of the Daniſh or Saxon prieſts acting the part of legiſlators and ſupreme judges among theſe haughty nations, obliging the greateſt kings, and moſt powerful ſtates, to ſubmit to their deciſions. The chief prieſt of the Northumbrians complained bitterly that he had reaped very little honour or advantage from all his devotions to the gods; which made him ſuſpect, that the gods whom he worſhipped had no power to reward their votaries. "There is not "one of your ſubjects (ſaid this high-prieſt to "king Edwin) who hath ſerved the gods with "ſo much devotion as I have done; and yet "there are many of them who have received "more ample rewards and greater honours, and Their power and honours.

[8] Mallet, Introduc. Hiſt. Denmark, c. 7.
[9] Cæſar de Bel. Gal. l. 6. [10] Id. ibid.

"have

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" have proſpered much better in all their af-
" fairs. If theſe gods had any power, would
" they not exert it in my favour, who have
" worſhipped them with ſo much zeal [11]?" Tacitus indeed acquaints us, that certain prieſts of tht god of war attended the armies of the ancient Germans, and flogged the ſoldiers when they committed any crime [12]. But this was certainly no very honourable, and probably no very lucrative office. The Daniſh and Saxon prieſts were not only exempted from war, but even prohibited to appear in arms, or ſo much as to mount a horſe [13]. But this muſt be conſidered as a mark of diſreſpect rather than of honour, as riding and wearing arms were the moſt honourable badges of diſtinction among thoſe warlike nations. Their prieſteſſes enjoyed much greater authority and higher honours among the ancient Germans, and their poſterity in this iſland, than their prieſts. Some of theſe conſecrated females were conſulted as infallible oracles, and almoſt worſhipped as divinities [14]; but this was as much owing to their gallantry, and the high opinion they entertained of the fair ſex in general, as to their devotion.

Their doctrines better known than thoſe of the Druids.

The religious principles of the ancient Germans, Danes, and other northern nations, are ſaid to have been originally very pure and ra-

[11] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[12] Tacit. de Morib. German. c. 7.
[13] Bedæ Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 13.
[14] Cluver. German. Antiq. p. 165.

tional;

tional; but, like thoſe of other Heathen nations, were gradually corrupted by the invention of many abſurd and extravagant fables. Theſe principles, however, are better known than thoſe of many other nations of antiquity; becauſe their prieſts did not affect that myſterious ſecrecy which was obſerved by the Druids and other ancient prieſts; and a very curious ſyſtem of their fabulous theology, called the *Edda*, hath lately been preſented to the public in the Engliſh language [15]. To this ſyſtem we muſt refer ſuch of our readers as are not ſatisfied with the following very brief abſtract of their religious principles. Cent. V.

Their religious principles.

The ancient Germans, Danes, and other northern nations, were not unacquainted with the great doctrine of one Supreme Deity; "the author of every thing that exiſteth; the eternal, "the ancient, the living and awful being; the "ſearcher into concealed things; the being that "never changeth; who liveth and governeth "during the ages, directeth every thing which "is high, and every thing which is low [16]." Of this glorious being, they eſteemed it impious to make any viſible repreſentation, or to imagine it poſſible that he could be confined within the walls of temples [17]. But theſe great truths had been in ſome meaſure loſt and corrupted by the introduction of a multiplicity of gods and

[15] See Northern Antiquities, vol. 2.
[16] Mallet Introduct. Hiſt. Den. c. 5.
[17] Tacit. de Mor. German. c. 9.

images,

Cent. V.

images, before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes in England, as will by and by appear. The Saxon and Daniſh prieſts believed and taught the immortality of the human ſoul, and a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death; rejecting the Druidical doctrine of the tranſmigration of ſouls as an abſurd fiction[18]. The place of rewards they call *Valhalla*, where the heroes ſpent the day in martial ſports, and the night in feaſting on the fleſh of the boar ſcrimner, and drinking large draughts of beer or mead out of the ſculls of their enemies whom they had ſlain in battle, preſented to them by beautiful young virgins, who waited upon them at table[19]. The place of puniſhment they called *Niflheim*, or, *The Abode of Evil*, where Hela dwelt; whoſe palace was *Anguiſh*, her table *Famine*, her waiters *Expectation*, and *Delay*, the threſhold of her door *Precipice*, her bed *Leanneſs*, and her looks ſtruck *terror* into all beholders[20]. In the former of thoſe places, all brave and good men, and in the latter, all cowards and bad men, were to reſide to the end of this world, when the heavens and the earth, and even the gods themſelves, were to be conſumed by fire[21]. After this general conflagration, a new and more glorious world was to ariſe out of the aſhes of the former; the heroes, with all good and juſt men, were to be admitted into

18 Mallet Introduct. c. 6. Keyſler Antiq. Septent. p. 117.
19 Id. ibid.
20 Id. ibid.
21 Edda Iſland, fable 23.

Gimle;

Gimle, a palace built of ſhining gold, far more beautiful than Valhalla; and cowards, aſſaſſins, falſe ſwearers, and adulterers, were to be confined in Naſtrande, a place built of the carcaſes of ſerpents, far more diſmal than Niflheim [22]. The moral precepts which were moſt inculcated by the Saxon and Daniſh prieſts, were theſe three;—To worſhip the gods,—To do no wrong,—and, To fight bravely in battle [23]. Their knowledge in morality, however, was not confined to theſe three heads, but they occaſionally recommended many other virtues; and it will not be eaſy to find, among compoſitions merely human, a more beautiful collection of prudential and moral maxims than in the Hovamaal, or ſublime diſcourſe, aſcribed to Odin, the chief deity of the Heathen Danes and Saxons [24]. Cent. V.

Odin is believed to have been the name of the one true God among the firſt colonies who came from the eaſt, and peopled Germany and Scandinavia, and among their poſterity for ſeveral ages [25]. But at length a mighty conqueror, the leader of a new army of adventurers from the eaſt, over-run the north of Europe, erected a great empire, aſſumed the name of *Odin*, and claimed the honours which had been formerly paid to that deity [26]. From thenceforward this Their gods. Odin.

22 Mallet, c. 5. 23 Keyſler Antiq. Septent. p. 124, &c.
24 See Northern Antiquities, v. 2. p. 206.
25 Cluver. Ger. Antiq. p. 183. Mallet Introduct. c. 6.
26 Id. ibid.

deified

Cent. V. deified mortal, under the name of *Odin* or *Wodin*, became the chief object of the idolatrous worſhip of the Saxons and Danes in this iſland, as well as of many other nations. Having been a mighty and ſucceſsful warrior, he was believed to be the god of war, who gave victory and revived courage in the conflict[27]. Having civilized, in ſome meaſure, the countries which he conquered, and introduced arts formerly unknown, he was alſo worſhipped as the god of arts and artiſts. In a word, to this Odin his deluded worſhippers impiouſly aſcribed all the attributes which belong only to the true God: to him they built magnificent temples, offered many ſacrifices, and conſecrated the fourth day of the week, which is ſtill called by his name in England, and in all the other countries where he was formerly worſhipped[28]. Notwithſtanding all this, the founders of all the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy pretended to be deſcended from Wodin, and ſome of them at the diſtance only of a few generations[29].

The goddeſs Frea. Next to Odin, Frea, or Frigga, his wife, was the moſt revered divinity among the Heathen Saxons, Danes, and other northern nations. As Odin was believed to be the father, Frea was eſteemed the mother of all the other gods[30]. In the moſt ancient times Frea was the ſame

[27] Edda Iſland, fable 10. [28] Id. ibid.
[29] Chron. Saxon. p. 13. 15. 19. 20. 25. 69. 77.
[30] Edda, fable 10.

with the goddeſs Herthus, or Earth, who was Cent. V.
ſo devoutly worſhipped by the Angli and other German nations [31]. But when Odin, the conqueror of the north, uſurped the honours due only to the true Odin, his wife Frea uſurped thoſe which had been formerly paid to mother Earth. She was worſhipped as the goddeſs of love and pleaſure, who beſtowed on her votaries a variety of delights, particularly happy marriages and eaſy child-births [32]. To Frea the ſixth day of the week was conſecrated, which ſtill bears her name.

Thor, the eldeſt and braveſt of the ſons of Thor.
Odin and Frea, was, after his parents, the greateſt god of the Saxons and Danes while they continued Heathens. They believed, that Thor reigned over all the aërial regions, which compoſed his immenſe palace, conſiſting of five hundred and forty halls; that he launched the thunder, pointed the lightning, and directed the meteors, winds, and ſtorms [33]. To him they addreſſed their prayers for favourable winds, refreſhing rains, and fruitful ſeaſons; and to him the fifth day of the week, which ſtill bears his name, was conſecrated.

Beſides theſe three greateſt divinities, the Inferior deities.
Saxons and Danes had a prodigious number of inferior gods and goddeſſes, to whom they paid ſome kind of religious homage. Of theſe it

[31] Tacit. de Morib. German. c. 40. [32] Mallet, Introduct. c. 6.
[33] Edda, fable 11.

Cent. V. will be ſufficient to name a few. Balder, the ſecond ſon of Odin and Frea, was the god of light; Niord, the god of waters; Tyr, the god of champions; Brage, the god of orators and poets; and Heimdal was the door-keeper of the gods, and the guardian of the rainbow[34]. A malevolent, cunning, and powerful ſpirit, named *Loke*, was by ſome eſteemed a god, by others an enemy both to gods and men, by all an object of many ſuperſtitious terrors[35]. Frea and Odin had eleven daughters, who were all goddeſſes, viz. Eira, the goddeſs of medicine; Geſione, of virginity; Fulla, of dreſs; Freya, of true love; Lofna, of reconciliation; Vara, of vows; Snotra, of good manners; Gna, the meſſenger of Frea, &c.[36] In a word, all the nations of the north, and amongſt others the Danes and Saxons, believed that the ſun, moon, ſtars, air, earth, ſea, rivers, lakes, woods, mountains, &c. were inhabited and ruled by certain genii, who were capable of doing much good or much hurt to mankind; and on that account were intitled to ſome degree of veneration[37]. Such were the vain imaginary deities our unhappy anceſtors, in the times of darkneſs, worſhipped. It now only remains to inquire, what were the various acts, and other circumſtances, of that worſhip.

[34] Mallet, Introduct. c. 6.
[35] Id. ibid.
[36] Id. ibid.
[37] Id. c. 5.

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Cent. V.

Rites of worſhip.

The acts of worſhip paid to their gods by the Heathen Danes and Saxons were theſe four; ſongs of praiſe and thankſgiving,—prayers and ſupplications,—offerings and ſacrifices,—incantations, and rites of divination; in order to—expreſs their admiration of their perfections, and gratitude for their benefits,—to obtain thoſe bleſſings from them which they deſired;—to appeaſe their diſpleaſure, and gain their love,—and to penetrate into their deſigns.

Songs of praiſe.

Mankind have been always apt to form their ideas of the diſpoſitions of the deities whom they worſhipped, from thoſe which they felt in their own boſoms. Conſcious that nothing was more ſoothing to themſelves than the voice of praiſe, expreſſions of gratitude and admiration; theſe they conſtantly offered to the objects of their worſhip. The ſongs of praiſe compoſed in honour of Odin, and ſung at the ſolemnities of his worſhip, were almoſt innumerable; and in thoſe ſongs, no fewer than one hundred and twenty-ſix honourable epithets were beſtowed on that god [38]. All the other gods and goddeſſes had many ſongs compoſed and ſung in their praiſe, with a number of epithets, in proportion to the powers aſcribed to them, and the degrees of veneration in which they were held by their worſhippers [39].

38 Northern Antiquities, v. 2. p. 189.

39 Id. ibid. Tacit. de morib. German. c. 2.

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Prayers.

Prayers conſtituted a very conſiderable part of the worſhip which the Pagan Danes and Saxons paid to their divinities; and it was one of the chief functions of their prieſts, to inſtruct them in the powers and properties of their ſeveral gods and goddeſſes, and in the prayers which they were to make to them according to their reſpective powers. To Odin they were directed to pray for victory in battle; to Frigga, for ſucceſs in love and courtſhip; to Thor, to avert his thunderbolts from themſelves, and point them againſt their enemies; to Niord, for proſperous voyages and ſucceſs in fiſhing; to Freya, for favourable ſeaſons and plentiful crops, &c. [40]. They boaſted much of their exact knowledge of the attributes and functions of their ſeveral gods, and of the prayers that were to be put up to each of them; and to this they aſcribed their proſperity and ſucceſs in their undertakings [41]. But when they did not obtain a favourable anſwer to their prayers, they were not afraid to teſtify their diſpleaſure againſt the gods, by ſhooting their arrows and throwing their darts towards heaven [42].

Sacrifices.

The Danes and Saxons were not ſparing of their offerings and ſacrifices, to gain the favour and appeaſe the anger of their gods; and it was another branch of the duty of their prieſts to

[40] Edda Iſland, Fable 12, 13.
[41] Id. ibid.
[42] Olai Magni Hiſt. l. 3. c. 9.

inſtruct them what kind of oblations were moſt acceptable to their ſeveral deities. To Odin they taught the people to ſacrifice horſes, dogs, and falcons, and on ſome occaſions cocks, and a fat bull, being all brave and fierce animals; to Frigga the largeſt hogs; and to Thor fat oxen and horſes [43]. Theſe victims were ſlain before the altar, their blood received into a veſſel prepared for that purpoſe, and ſome part of it ſprinkled on the aſſembly: the intrails were inſpected by the prieſts, to diſcover the will of the gods from their appearances: ſome of the fleſh was burnt on the altar, and on the reſt the prieſts and people feaſted [44]. At theſe feaſts, their favourite liquors, beer and ale, were not forgotten; of which they drank deep and frequent draughts to the honour of their gods, putting up ſome wiſh or prayer at every draught. In times of famine, or other national calamities, or at the eve of ſome dangerous war, the Danes and Saxons, as well as other Heathen nations, offered human ſacrifices to their gods, believing them to be more acceptable than any other. Theſe unhappy victims were commonly choſen from among criminals, captives, or ſlaves; but on ſome preſſing occaſions, perſons of the higheſt dignity were not ſpared [45]. Cent. V.

No nations in the world were more addicted to divination, or made greater efforts to pene- Divination.

43 Mallet, Introduct. c. 7. 44 Id. ibid.
45 Id. ibid.

Cent. V.

trate into futurity, and diſcover the counſels of heaven, than the ancient Danes and Saxons. Beſides thoſe arts of divination practiſed by their prieſts, in common with thoſe of other nations, they had many others peculiar to themſelves, which may be ſeen in the authors quoted below[46]. They gave great credit to the predictions of certain old women, who pretended to conſult the dead, to converſe with familiar ſpirits, and to have many other ways of diſcovering the will of the gods, and the iſſue of important undertakings. Some of theſe women became ſo famous for their reſponſes, that they were conſulted by the greateſt ſtates as infallible oracles, and even revered as goddeſſes, who, if they had lived a few ages later, would have been burnt for witches[47].

Their temples.

In very ancient times, the Saxons, Danes, and other northern nations, had no covered temples; but worſhipped their gods in ſacred groves and circles of rude ſtones. By degrees, however, they began to build temples, in imitation of other nations, and at length erected ſome of incredible grandeur and magnificence[48]. In each of theſe temples there was a chapel, which was eſteemed the moſt holy place, where the images

[46] Tacit. de Morib. German. c. 9, 10. Cluver. Antiq. Ger. l. 1. c. 36. Keyſler Antiq. Septent. p. 323, &c. Northern Antiquities, vol. 1. c. 7.

[47] Tacit. de Morib. Ger. c. 8. Cæſar Bel. Gal. l. 1. c. 50. Keyſler, p. 59.

[48] Olai Magni Hiſt. l. 3. c. 6.

of

of the gods were ſet upon a kind of altar; before which ſtood another altar, plated with iron, for the holy fire, which burnt perpetually; and near it a vaſe for receiving the blood of the victims, and a bruſh for ſprinkling it upon the people [49]. Cent. V.

About the ſame time that the Danes, Saxons, and other northern nations began to build temples, they began alſo to ſet up the ſtatues or images of their gods in theſe temples. The image of Odin was crowned, and completely armed, with a drawn ſword in his right hand; that of Frigga was an hermaphrodite, a bow in one hand, and a ſword in the other; that of Thor was crowned with ſtars, and armed with a ponderous club; and thoſe of the other gods had emblems ſuited to their reſpective attributes [50]. There were many ſuch temples adorned with idols in different parts of England, while the Anglo-Saxons continued Heathens; but they were all deſtroyed at their converſion to Chriſtianity [51]. Images.

Though the ſacred fire was kept perpetually burning, and ſacrifices were frequently, perhaps daily, offered in the temples of the Danes and Saxons; yet there were certain great feſtivals that were celebrated with peculiar ſolemnity. One of the greateſt of theſe feſtivals was cele- Feſtivals.

49 Mallet, vol. 1. c. 7.
50 Mallet, Introduct. c. 7. Verſtegan's Reſtitution, &c. c. 5.
51 Bedæ Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. c. 13.

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brated at the winter ſolſtice, which was the Mother Night, both on account of this feſtival, and of its being the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon year. This feaſt was alſo called *Iule*, a name by which the Chriſtian feſtival of Chriſtmas, obſerved about the ſame ſeaſon of the year, is ſtill known in many parts of Scotland, and in ſome parts of England. The Heathen Iule was celebrated in honour of the god Thor, not only with ſacrifices, but with feaſting, drinking, dancing, and every poſſible expreſſion of mirth and joy [52]. The ſecond great feſtival was kept during the firſt quarter of the ſecond moon of the year, in honour of the goddeſs Frea, much in the ſame manner with the former [53]. The third and greateſt feſtival was celebrated in honour of Odin, in the beginning of the ſpring, before they ſet out on their warlike expeditions, in order to obtain victory from that god of battles. Beſides theſe three great feſtivals, in honour of their three greateſt gods, they kept many others, at different ſeaſons, in honour of their inferior deities [54].

Differences between the Paganiſm of the Saxons and Danes, and that of the ancient Britons.

Such was the vain, abſurd, and cruel ſuperſtition which reigned in all thoſe parts of England poſſeſſed by the Saxons and Danes before their converſion to Chriſtianity. The intelligent reader muſt obſerve, that though it bore a general reſemblance in ſeveral particulars to the Druidiſm of the ancient Britons, it differed from it greatly

[52] Mallet. c. 7. [53] Id. ibid. [54] Id. ibid.

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in not a few reſpects. The Saxon and Daniſh prieſts were neither held in ſuch profound veneration, nor enjoyed ſo much power, eſpecially in civil affairs, as the Druids: their ſpeculative opinions in many things were very different; as were alſo the objects, the ſeaſons, and ceremonies, of their worſhip. Cent. V.

In the period between the arrival and the converſion of the Saxons, the Chriſtian religion was profeſſed by all the other nations of Britain, except the northern Picts, among whom it was alſo introduced by the famous St. Columba, A. D. 565[55]. It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that the church-hiſtory of the Britons, Scots, and Picts, is very imperfect in this period; either becauſe their clergy in thoſe calamitous times had no leiſure to write memoirs of their tranſactions, or becauſe thoſe memoirs have been loſt. Church-hiſtory of the Britons, Scots, and Picts, imperfect.

After the departure of Germanus, the Britiſh churches were governed with great prudence, and preſerved from the contagion of hereſy, by ſome of his diſciples. Among theſe, Dubritius and Iltutus were moſt diſtinguiſhed for their learning, as well as for their zeal and piety. Dubritius was firſt biſhop of Landaff, and afterwards archbiſhop of Caerleon; and had the chief direction of two ſchools for the education of young perſons for the ſervice of the church[56]. Iltutus preſided over a famous ſeminary of learn- Church-hiſtory of the Britons.

[55] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 4.

[56] Uſſer. Primord. Brit. Eccleſ. p. 445.

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ing, at a place which, from him, is ſtill called *Lantuct*, or *The church of Iltut*, in Glamorganſhire [57]. In theſe academies many excellent perſons, who arrived at the higheſt dignities in the church, both at home and abroad, received their education; as Samſon archbiſhop of Dol in Bretagne; St. Magloire, his ſucceſſor in that ſee; Maclovius biſhop of St. Malo; Daniel biſhop of Bangor; St. Theleau biſhop of Landaff; St. David, biſhop of Menevia; and many others [58]. The Britiſh churches, therefore, amidſt all the calamities of this period, flouriſhed conſiderably both in piety and learning, under the miniſtry of Iltutus, Dubritius, their pupils, and ſucceſſors. It cannot be denied, indeed, that Gildas, who flouriſhed in thoſe times, hath left a very diſmal picture of the ignorance and irreligion of the Britiſh clergy. But Gildas was evidently a man of a querulous and gloomy temper, who painted every thing in the moſt unfavourable colours; and many of the clergy were probably far inferior to the eminent perſons named above in ſanctity or knowledge [59].

Britiſh councils.

Several Britiſh ſynods were aſſembled in this period; but we know very little with certainty of their tranſactions. Some of theſe ſeem to have been mixed aſſemblies of the moſt conſiderable men both in church and ſtate, for regulating civil as well as eccleſiaſtical affairs [60].

57 Leland. Collect. v. 2. p. 42.
58 Godwin de præſul. Angliæ, p. 600. 617.
59 Gild. Epiſt.
60 Spelman. Concil. vol. 1. p. 60, 61.

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In one of theſe mixed aſſemblies, A. D. 465, king Vortigern is ſaid to have been dethroned, and Ambroſius choſen king; in another, A. D. 512, Dubritius was tranſlated from Landaff to Caerleon, and St. Theleau appointed biſhop of Landaff in his room; and in a third, A. D. 516, the famous king Arthur was crowned, and his uncle St. David appointed archbiſhop of Caerleon; who ſoon after removed the ſeat of his ſee to Menevia, which was afterwards, from him, called *St. David's* [61]. This celebrated archbiſhop held an eccleſiaſtical ſynod of all the Britiſh clergy, A. D. 519, for extirpating the remains, and preventing the revival, of the Pelagian hereſy. Oudocius biſhop of Landaff held three provincial ſynods of the clergy of his dioceſe, for inflicting the cenſures of the church againſt certain powerful delinquents. But the tranſactions of thoſe ſynods reflect very little honour on the Britiſh princes or clergy concerned in them; as they ſhew the former to have been guilty of the moſt horrid acts of perfidy and cruelty, and the latter to have been ready enough to accept of liberal donations to the church, as the moſt ſolid evidences of their repentance [62]. Cent. V.

The church-hiſtory of the Scots and Picts, in this period, is even more imperfect than that of the Britons. A few years before the arrival of the Saxons, Palladius, a Greek by birth, is ſaid to have been ordained a biſhop by Celeſtine biſhop Church-hiſtory of the Scots and Picts.

[61] Spelman. Concil. vol. 1. p. 60, 61. [62] Id. ibid.

of

Cent. V. of Rome, and ſent to the Scots who believed in Chriſt [63]. One chief deſign of this miſſion ſeems to have been, to preſerve the Chriſtian Scots from the infection of the Pelagian hereſy, which was ſo zealouſly propagated by their countryman Celeſtius. It is not certainly known how long Palladius continued among the Scots, nor who ſucceeded him in the direction of their eccleſiaſtical affairs; though it is unqueſtionable that there muſt have been a conſiderable interval between his departure or death and the arrival of the famous St. Columba from Ireland, about the middle of the ſixth century [64]. This extraordinary perſon ſoon gained ſo great an aſcendant, both over princes and people, that he became a kind of dictator among the Scots and Picts, in civil as well as religious matters, for more than thirty years [65]. Having obtained a grant of the ſmall iſland Hii, one of the Ebudæ, he there built a monaſtery, which was long conſidered as the mother and queen of all the monaſteries in Scotland; and its abbots, though only preſbyters, were reſpected as the chief eccleſiaſtical perſons among the Scots, out of regard to its founder St. Columba, who was a preſbyter, and not a biſhop [66]. In this monaſtery many excellent perſons received their education, and were ſent from thence, not only to inſtruct the Scots and Picts, but even to convert the Saxons, as we ſhall ſee in the next ſection.

[63] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 13.
[64] Id. l. 3. c. 4.
[65] Adamnan. Vita St. Columb.
[66] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 4.

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We know of no very remarkable change that happened in the doctrine, diſcipline, or worſhip, of the Britiſh churches, between the arrival and converſion of the Saxons; thoſe of the ſouth ſtill adhering to the Gallic ritual, which had been introduced among them by St. Germanus biſhop of Auxere, and thoſe of the north to that which had been introduced by their firſt inſtructors. Cent. V.

SECTION II.

The hiſtory of Religion in Great Britain, from the arrival of Auſtin, A. D. 596, *to* A. D. 700.

THE Saxons, at their coming into Britain, were not only pagans, but they were animated with the moſt violent hatred againſt Chriſtianity. This appeared by their murdering the Chriſtian clergy without mercy, and deſtroying their places of worſhip, whenever they fell into their hands[1]. Their enmity againſt the Chriſtian religion was kept alive, and even more inflamed, by their long and bloody conteſts with the Britons, who were Chriſtians. But when the fierceneſs of theſe conteſts abated, and they began to make treaties of peace, and form alliances, with the ancient inhabitants of the country, and with the other Chriſtians, their animoſity againſt the Chriſtian religion gradually diminiſhed, they Cent. VI. Circumſtances which paved the way for the introduction of Chriſtianity.

[1] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.

became

Cent. VI. became better acquainted with it, and looked upon it with a more favourable eye. The marriage of Ethelbert king of Kent, A. D. 570, with Birtha, daughter of Cherebert king of France, a Chriſtian princeſs of great virtue and merit, contributed not a little to abate the prejudices of that prince and his ſubjects againſt her religion; for the free exerciſe of which ſhe had made ſtipulations in the marriage-contract[2]. For this purpoſe, ſhe was allowed the uſe of a ſmall church without the walls of Canterbury, where Luidhart, a French biſhop, who came over in her retinue, with other clergymen, publicly performed all the rites of the Chriſtian worſhip[3]. By theſe, and other means, many of the Anglo-Saxons, particularly in the kingdom of Kent, were brought to entertain ſo favourable an opinion of the Chriſtian religion, that they were very deſirous of being better inſtructed in its principles[4].

Arrival and ſucceſs of Auſtin and his companions.

When the Anglo-Saxons were thus diſpoſed to give the goſpel a fair hearing, Providence provided them with inſtructors. St. Gregory (who was advanced to the papal chair A. D. 590), prompted by his zeal for religion, and having his compaſſion excited by the ſight of ſome beautiful Engliſh youths expoſed to ſale in the ſtreets of Rome, reſolved to attempt the converſion of their countrymen, who, he was told, were ſtill

[2] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 25. [3] Id. ibid.
[4] Gregor. Epiſt. l. 5. epiſt. 58, 59.

Hea-

Heathens[5]. With this view, he appointed Auſtin, or Auguſtin, a monk of the convent of St. Andrew's at Rome, with forty other monks, to go into England, and endeavour to bring the people of that country to the knowledge and profeſſion of Chriſtianity[6]. Theſe miſſionaries accordingly ſet out on their journey; but before they proceeded far, beginning to reflect on the great diſtance of the country, the ferocious character of its inhabitants, and their own ignorance of the language of thoſe they were appointed to inſtruct, they made a ſtop, and ſent back Auſtin their leader, to repreſent theſe difficulties to St. Gregory, and obtain his permiſſion for their return to Rome. But Gregory rejected their requeſt, and ſent them by Auſtin an animating letter, exhorting them to deſpiſe all dangers and difficulties, and proceed boldly in their glorious undertaking, for which they would obtain an immortal reward in heaven[7]. By the ſame meſſenger, he furniſhed them with letters of recommendation to the king, queen, and ſeveral biſhops of France; who received them kindly, and provided them with all neceſſaries, particularly with interpreters, who underſtood the language of the Anglo-Saxons, which was then nearly the ſame with that of the Franks[8]. Thus encouraged and provided, Auſtin, with his companions, ſailed from France A. D. 596, Cent. VI.

5 Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 23. l. 2. c. 1.
6 Id. ibid.
7 Gregor. Epiſt. l. 4. epiſt. 57.
8 Id. l. 5. epiſt. 54. Bed. l. 1. c. 23, 24.

and

Cent. VI. and landed in the iſle of Thanet; from whence they immediately diſpatched one of their interpreters, to acquaint king Ethelbert with the news and deſign of their coming. That prince ſoon after gave them an audience in the open air; and having heard their meſſage, replied, that he could not without further conſideration abandon the religion of his anceſtors; but as they had come ſo far on a friendly errand, he aſſigned them a place of reſidence in the city of Canterbury, and allowed them to uſe their beſt endeavours to convert his ſubjects [9]. The miſſionaries having thus obtained the royal licence, entered the city of Canterbury in ſolemn proceſſion; carrying before them the picture of Chriſt and a ſilver croſs, and ſinging the following hymn: "We beſeech thee, O Lord! of thy mercy let "thy wrath and anger be turned away from this "city, and from thy holy place; for we have "ſinned. Hallelujah!" In this manner they proceeded to the place of their reſidence, and immediately entered on the labours of their miſſion; which were crowned with ſuch ſucceſs, that in a very ſhort time the king, and great multitudes of his ſubjects, were converted; of whom Auſtin baptized no fewer than ten thouſand on Chriſtmas day [10]. Things bearing this favourable aſpect, Auſtin made a journey into France; and was there, by the archbiſhop of

[9] Bed. l. 1. c. 25.

[10] Gervaſ. Act. Pontific. Cant. apud decem ſcript. col. 1632.

Arles,

Arles, conſecrated archbiſhop of the Engliſh, hoping that this new dignity would give additional influence to his exhortations [11]. About the ſame time he diſpatched two of his companions to Rome, to acquaint St. Gregory with the joyful tidings of the converſion of the Engliſh; and with them he ſent ſeveral queſtions in writing, to which he deſired anſwers, for the regulation of his future conduct [12]. Some of theſe queſtions are ſo trifling, and others ſo indelicate, that it would be very improper to inſert a tranſlation of them in this place: they may be found at full length, with St. Gregory's anſwers, in the authors quoted below [13]. Cent. VI.

Gregory received the news of Auſtin's ſucceſs in England with great joy; and reſolving to neglect nothing in his power to render it ſtill greater, he ſent back his meſſengers, and with them Mellitus, Juſtus, Paulinus, and ſeveral others, to aſſiſt in propagating the knowledge of the goſpel among the Engliſh. With theſe new miſſionaries he ſent recommendatory letters to ſeveral princes and biſhops of France, and to the king and queen of Kent, with certain prudential admonitions to Auſtin, a model for the government of the church of England; and a valuable preſent of books, veſtments, ſacred utenſils, and holy relics [14]. One of the advices which Gre- Cent. VII. New miſſionaries, &c. ſent to England.

[11] Bed. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 27. [12] Id. ibid.
[13] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 27. Spelman. Con. tom. 1. p. 95.
[14] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 28—33. Spelman. Con. t. 1. p. 81.—105.

Cent. VII.

gory gave to Auſtin was, not to deſtroy the Heathen temples of the Engliſh, but only to remove the images of their gods, to waſh the walls with holy water, to erect altars, and depoſit relics in them, and ſo convert them into Chriſtian churches; not only to ſave the expence of building new ones, but that the people might be more eaſily prevailed upon to frequent thoſe places of worſhip to which they had been accuſtomed. He directs him further, to accommodate the ceremonies of the Chriſtian worſhip, as much as poſſible, to thoſe of the Heathen, that the people might not be much ſtartled at the change; and in particular, he adviſes him to allow the Chriſtian converts, on certain feſtivals, to kill and eat a great number of oxen to the glory of God, as they had formerly done to the honour of the devil[15]. Theſe admonitions, which were but too well obſerved, introduced the groſſeſt corruptions into the Chriſtian worſhip, and ſhew how much the apoſtles of the ſixth and ſeventh centuries had departed from the ſimplicity and ſincerity of thoſe of the firſt.

St. Gregory's model of government for the church of England.

Though Gregory's model for the government of the church of England was never put in execution, the following very brief account of it may not be unacceptable. In a letter to Auſtin, with which he ſent him the pall (an ornament peculiar to metropolitans), he directs him to ordain twelve biſhops in his own province of

[15] Bed. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 30.

Canter-

Canterbury; to ſend a biſhop to York; and as ſoon as the Engliſh in the north were converted, to ordain twelve other biſhops in thoſe parts as ſuffragans to the ſee of York, to whoſe biſhop he would then ſend the pall. He ordains, that as long as Auſtin lived he ſhould enjoy the primacy over all the biſhops of both provinces, as well as over all the Britiſh biſhops; but that after his death the metropolitical ſee ſhould be removed from Canterbury to London; and that from thenceforward, the archbiſhops of London and York ſhould have precedency, according to the ſeniority of their conſecrations[16]. But though theſe directions might have great influence on Auſtin and his clergy who had come from Rome, they were ſo little regarded by the Engliſh, and ſo reſolutely oppoſed by the Britons, that they were never executed. Cent. VII.

Auſtin, who ſeems to have been naturally vain enough, was much elated by thoſe marks of diſtinction which he received from Rome, and laboured with great earneſtneſs to eſtabliſh his metropolitical authority over the Britiſh churches. With this view, he held two councils with the Britiſh biſhops and clergy; in which he propoſed to them, that if they would acknowledge him for their metropolitan; conform to the church of Rome in the time of keeping Eaſter, and the manner of adminiſtering baptiſm; and join with the Roman clergy in preaching to the Engliſh, Auſtin's attempts to ſubject the Britiſh churches to his authority.

[16] Bed. l. 1. c. 29.

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he would bear with them in other things [17]. But the Britons, ſtrongly attached to their own ancient cuſtoms, and greatly irritated at the pride of Auſtin, who did not ſo much as riſe from his ſeat to receive them at their coming into council, rejected all his propoſals; which put this meek apoſtle into ſo violent a paſſion, that he threatened them with the wrath of Heaven, and the hoſtilities of the Engliſh [18]. What influence this good man had in drawing down the wrath of Heaven on the unhappy Britons, it is not ſo eaſy to determine; but we have good reaſon to ſuſpect, that he had but too much hand in kindling the flames of war which ſoon after broke out between them and their ancient enemies the Engliſh, and involved them in very great calamities.

Auſtin conſecrates biſhops, and dies.

Auſtin, after he had failed in his attempts of reducing the Britiſh churches under his authority, applied himſelf to enlarge and regulate the church of England. He conſecrated Juſtus to be biſhop of Rocheſter, Mellitus to be biſhop of the Eaſt-Saxons, and Laurentius to be his own ſucceſſor in the ſee of Canterbury [19]. Theſe conſecrations were performed A. D. 604; and Auſtin died either that year or the year after, leaving the knowledge and profeſſion of Chriſtianity among the Engliſh confined within the narrow limits of the little kingdom of Kent [20].

17 Bed. l. 2. c. 2. Spel. Con. t. 1. p. 104.
18 Id. ibid. 19 Id. l. 2. c. 3.
20 Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 91.

Lauren-

Cent. VII.

Laurentius, the ſucceſſor of Auſtin, made a new effort to bring the Britiſh Chriſtians to adopt the uſages of the church of Rome, by writing paſtoral letters both to them and to the Scots, earneſtly intreating them to conform to the rites of the Roman church, particularly as to the time of keeping Eaſter[21]. But theſe letters made no impreſſion on thoſe to whom they were addreſſed.

Laurentius ſucceeds Auſtin.

Mellitus was more ſucceſsful in his endeavours to convert the Eaſt-Saxons, who inhabited the countries of Eſſex and Middleſex, and were under the immediate government of Seber, ſiſter's ſon to Ethelbert king of Kent, to whom he was tributary. That prince, by the preaching of Mellitus, and the influence of his royal uncle, was perſuaded to embrace the Chriſtian religion; in which he was imitated by ſo many of his ſubjects, that a biſhop's ſee was eſtabliſhed at London, which was then the capital of that little ſtate[22]. Mellitus, the firſt biſhop of this ſee, made a journey to Rome A. D. 610, to conſult with Boniface IV. who then filled the papal chair, about the affairs of the church of England, and was preſent at a council which was then celebrated in that city; and at his return brought with him the decrees of that council, together with letters from the pope to Ethelbert king of Kent, and Laurentius archbiſhop of Canterbury[23].

Mellitus converts the kingdom of Eſſex.

21 Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 4.
22 Id. l. 2. c. 3.
23 Id. l. 2. c. 4.

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Apoſtaſy of the Engliſh, and their recovery.

Not long after the return of Mellitus from Rome, the infant church of England was involved in very great calamities, and threatened with total ruin. For Ethelbert king of Kent dying February 24, A. D. 616, his ſon and ſucceſſor Eadbald married his father's widow, and renounced Chriſtianity, which did not tolerate ſuch inceſtuous marriages; and his defection occaſioned the apoſtaſy of the greateſt part of his ſubjects [24]. Seber, king of the Eaſt-Saxons, did not long ſurvive his uncle, but dying that ſame year, was ſucceeded by his three ſons; who having never been Chriſtians, reſtored the Pagan worſhip in their dominions, and obliged Mellitus to retire into Kent [25].

Here the three biſhops, Laurentius, Juſtus, and Mellitus, held a conſultation concerning the preſent poſture of affairs; and being of opinion, that the cauſe of Chriſtianity among the Engliſh was deſperate, they reſolved to retire into France, and reſerve themſelves for better times. In conſequence of this reſolution, Juſtus and Mellitus actually departed; but while Laurentius was preparing to follow them, Eadbald king of Kent, ſtruck with remorſe for his criminal conduct, repudiated his mother-in-law, returned to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and encouraged Laurentius to reſume the duties of his office, and invite his brethren to return; who accordingly came back about a year after their departure.

[24] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 5.

[25] Id. ibid.

Juſtus

Juſtus was reſtored to the ſee of Rocheſter; but the Eaſt-Saxons continuing in their apoſtaſy, Mellitus did not recover his biſhopric of London[26]. However, Laurentius archbiſhop of Canterbury dying A. D. 619, Mellitus was advanced to the archiepiſcopal chair; in which he ſat about ſix years, and was ſucceeded by Juſtus biſhop of Rocheſter A. D. 624[27]. Cent. VII.

Converſion of the Northumbrians.

About this time an event happened that paved the way for the further propagation of the goſpel in England. This was the marriage of Edwin king of Northumberland to Edelburga, daughter of Ethelbert king of Kent; who being a Chriſtian princeſs, had the free exerciſe of the Chriſtian religion ſecured to her and her houſehold; and Paulinus being conſecrated a biſhop by Juſtus, accompanied her into Northumberland[28]. This prelate was not only allowed to perform the duties of his ſacred function in the queen's family, but to preach the goſpel to as many as were willing to hear it. His labours for ſome time were not very ſucceſsful; but king Edwin, who was a wiſe and great prince, having, after long conſideration, and many conſultations with his council, embraced the Chriſtian religion, his example was followed by Coiffi the high-prieſt and many of his nobility, and great multitudes of the common people[29]. Paulinus commonly followed the court, which reſided

[26] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. c. 5. [27] Godwin de Præſul. Ang. p. 58.
[28] Bed. l. 2. c. 9. [29] Id. c. 14.

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ſometimes in Bernicia and ſometimes in Deira, preaching and baptizing his converts in ſome neighbouring ſtream or fountain. The crowds of theſe converts at length became ſo great, that Paulinus is ſaid to have baptized no fewer than twelve thouſand in one day in the river Swale [30]. By the influence of Edwin, and the miniſtry of Paulinus, Carpwald king of the Eaſt-Angles, and many of his ſubjects, particularly in Lincolnſhire, were converted [31]. To reward theſe mighty ſervices, Edward erected a biſhop's ſee at York for Paulinus, and even obtained an archbiſhop's pall for him from pope Honorius [32].

Apoſtaſy of the Northumbrians.

But when things bore this favourable aſpect, the church of Northumberland was almoſt entirely ruined in a moment, by the deplorable fall of the great king Edwin and his army in battle A.D. 633 [33]. The apoſtaſy of the Northumbrians was ſo general, and the diſtractions of their country ſo great after that fatal event, that Paulinus found himſelf obliged to abandon his ſcattered flock, and retire into Kent, where he was appointed biſhop of Rocheſter.

Honorius archbiſhop of Canterbury.

Juſtus archbiſhop of Canterbury dying A.D. 633, he was ſucceeded by Honorius, a diſciple of St. Gregory, who was conſecrated by Paulinus at Lincoln [34]. This prelate was the firſt in England who began to divide his dioceſe into pariſhes, and fix a reſiding clergyman in each;

[30] Nennius apud xv. ſcript. p. 117. [31] Bed. l. 2. c. 16.
[32] Id. c. 17. [33] Id. c. 20. [34] Id. c. 18.

as

as before his time the clergy reſided either in monaſteries or biſhops houſes, and made occaſional journeys into other parts, preaching and adminiſtering the ſacraments [35]. Cent. VII.

The churches of Northumberland and Eaſt-Anglia did not contiue long in a ſtate of deſolation; for king Oſwald, who had lived many years among the Scots, by whom he was kindly entertained, and inſtructed in the knowledge of Chriſtianity, having recovered the kingdom of Northumberland, ſent into Scotland for Chriſtian clergy to inſtruct and convert his ſubjects. Aidan, one of the moſt pious and learned of theſe Scotch miſſionaries, was appointed the firſt biſhop of Lindisfarne, or Holy-Iſland; to which place the biſhop's ſeat was removed from York [36]. By the labours of Aidan, and many other Scotch monks who followed him into England, the Northumbrians were ſoon reſtored to the knowledge and profeſſion of Chriſtianity [37]. As the Eaſt-Angles had apoſtatized at the ſame time, they were reſtored in the ſame manner with the Northumbrians. For Sigebert, a prince of their royal family, having lived ſome time in exile among the Franks, and been by them converted to Chriſtianity, at his reſtoration to his kingdom, brought with him Felix, a Burgundian prieſt, who was appointed the firſt biſhop of the Northumbrians return to Chriſtianity.

35 Godwin, p. 59.

36 Bed. l. 3. c. 3.

37 Id. c. 5.

Eaſt-

Cent. VII. East-Angles, and had his see fixed at a place called *Domnoc* [38].

Kingdom of Wessex converted.

About the same time that Christianity was thus restored among the Northumbrians and East-Angles, it began to be preached to the West-Saxons by Berinus, a missionary from Rome [39]. The arrival of Oswald king of Northumberland at the court of Cynigisel king of Wessex, A. D. 635, to marry the daughter of that prince, contributed greatly to the success of Berinus: for by his persuasion Cynigisel not only embraced the Christian religion, but also founded an episcopal see at Dorchester; of which Berinus was the first bishop [40].

East Saxons return to Christianity.

When the East-Saxons had continued about forty years in a state of apostasy, Sigebert their king was persuaded to embrace Christianity by his friend Oswi king of Northumberland; and great multitudes of his subjects were converted by the ministry of Chad, a Northumbrian priest, who was consecrated bishop of London by Finanus bishop of Lindisfarne [41].

Kingdom of Mercia converted.

Though the middle parts of England, which constituted the powerful kingdom of Mercia, were surrounded by Christian states on all hands, they continued a long time in Pagan darkness. These parts however were at length visited by the light of the gospel, about the middle of the

38 Bed. l. 2. c. 15.
39 Id. c. 7.
40 Id. ibid.
41 Id. l. 2. c. 22.

ſeventh century, in the following manner[42]. Cent. VII.
Piada, the eldeſt ſon of Penda king of Mercia, having viſited the court of Oſwi king of Northumberland in order to marry Alchflida, the daughter of that prince, was there converted to Chriſtianity, with all his followers. At his return home, he carried with him four clergymen, named *Chad*, *Adda*, *Belle*, and *Diuma*, who preached the goſpel in Mercia with great ſucceſs; and the laſt of theſe, who was a Scotchman, was conſecrated the firſt biſhop of the Mercians by biſhop Finanus[43].

Diſputes about the time of keeping Eaſter.

From the above account, it appears, that the Engliſh in the kingdoms of Kent and Weſſex were converted to and inſtructed in the Chriſtian religion by miſſionaries from Rome and France; while thoſe of Mercia and Northumberland received the light of the goſpel from preachers of the Scotch nation. All theſe different teachers eſtabliſhed the rites and uſages of the churches from whence they came, in thoſe which they planted; which gave riſe to many controverſies between the Engliſh churches in the ſouth, and thoſe in the north, about their reſpective cuſtoms; particularly about the time of keeping Eaſter, and the form of the eccleſiaſtical tonſure. The churches planted by the Roman miſſionaries kept Eaſter on the firſt Sunday after the fourteenth and before the twenty-ſecond day of the firſt moon after the vernal

[42] Bed. l. 2. c. 21. [43] Id. ibid.

equinox;

Cent. VII. equinox; and thoſe planted by the Scotch kept that feſtival on the firſt Sunday after the thirteenth and before the twenty-firſt day of the ſame moon[44]. By this means, when the fourteenth day of that moon happened to be a Sunday, thoſe of the Scotch communion celebrated the feaſt of Eaſter on that day; whereas thoſe of the Romiſh communion did not celebrate theirs till the Sunday after. The Roman clergy in the ſouth of England, animated with the haughty intolerant ſpirit of the church from whence they came, were not contented with enjoying their own cuſtoms in peace, but laboured with much violence to impoſe them upon the Britons, Scots, and northern Engliſh, who were all abundantly tenacious of their own uſages. At length a famous council was ſummoned by Oſwi king of Northumberland at Whitby in Yorkſhire, A. D. 664, to determine this mighty controverſy; which occaſioned no little confuſion in his own family, his queen and ſon following the Roman ritual, while he obſerved the Scotch. The principal champions on the Romiſh ſide at this council were, Agelbert biſhop of the Weſt Saxons, with Agatho, James, Romanus, and Wilfred, prieſts; while Colman biſhop of Lindisfarne, with ſome of his clergy, managed the argument on the other ſide. The Scotch orators maintained, That their manner of celebrating Eaſter was preſcribed by St. John the beloved diſ-

[44] Bed. l. 3. c. 25.

ciple;

ciple; and the Romaniſts affirmed, with equal confidence, that theirs was inſtituted by St. Peter, the prince of the apoſtles, and the door-keeper of heaven. Oſwi was ſtruck with this laſt circumſtance; and both parties acknowledging that Peter kept the keys of heaven, the king declared that he was determined not to diſoblige this celeſtial porter upon any account, but to obſerve all his inſtitutions to the utmoſt of his power, for fear he ſhould turn his back upon him when he came to the gate of heaven. This ſagacious declaration was applauded by the whole aſſembly; and the Roman orators obtained a complete victory: at which biſhop Colman, and many of his clergy, were ſo much offended, that they left England, and returned into their native country[45]. Though venerable Bede cenſures theſe Scotch clergy with great ſeverity, for the abominable error into which they had fallen about the time of keeping Eaſter, he commends them very much for their great learning, piety, and virtue; particularly for their contempt of riches, and their great diligence in their miniſterial offices; which made ſome little atonement for their moſt pernicious hereſy[46]. After the departure of Colman, one Tuda was choſen biſhop of the Northumbrians; but he dying not long after, Wilfred, who had been preceptor to Alchfred prince of Northumberland, and the chief ſpeaker on the victorious Cent. VII.

45 Bed. l. 3. c. 25.

46 Id. c. 26.

ſide

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ſide at the late council of Whitby, was elected in his room, and ſent into France to receive conſecration. He was accordingly conſecrated by his friend Agilbertus, now archbiſhop of Paris; but making too long a ſtay abroad, his ſee was filled up in his abſence by Ceada a Scotchman, but of the Roman communion, who was conſecrated by Wini, the firſt biſhop of Wincheſter [47].

Theodore archbiſhop of Canterbury.

After Oſwi king of Northumberland embraced the Roman cuſtoms, he became zealous in his endeavours to bring all the Engliſh churches to a conformity with and obedience to the church of Rome. With this view, he joined with Egbert king of Kent in ſending Wighart, elect of Canterbury, to Rome, to be conſecrated according to the Roman ritual. Wighart was received and treated with great reſpect at Rome, but died, before his conſecration, of the plague, which then raged in that city [48]. Upon this, Vitalian, who then filled the papal chair, took a bold ſtep, and made choice of one Theodore a native of Tarſus in Cilicia, a man of courage, learning, and good ſenſe, to fill the place for which Wighart was deſigned, and conſecrated him archbiſhop of Canterbury 25th March, A. D. 668 [49]. Theodore having received the clerical tonſure after the Roman form, ſet out for England; where he arrived in May 669,

[47] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, apud xv. ſcript. p. 58.
[48] Bed. l. 3. c. 29. [49] Id. l. 4. c. 1.

and

and was favourably received by Egbert king of Kent, and the other Engliſh princes. Soon after his arrival, the new archbiſhop viſited all the Engliſh churches, conſecrated biſhops where they were wanting, and reduced every thing to a perfect conformity to the church of Rome. In this progreſs he terminated the diſpute between Ceada and Wilfred about the biſhopric of the Northumbrians, by tranſlating Ceada to the ſee of Litchfield, and eſtabliſhing Wilfred at York, which was now again become the ſeat of the biſhop of Northumberland [50]. Cent. VII.

Still further to conſolidate this union of the Engliſh churches with each other, and with the church of Rome, Theodore ſummoned a council of the Engliſh biſhops, with their chief clergy, to meet at Hartford, A. D. 673. At this council, beſides the metropolitan, Biſi biſhop of the Eaſt-Angles, Lutherius biſhop of the Weſt-Saxons, Winfred biſhop of the Mercians, and Putta biſhop of Rocheſter, were preſent in perſon, and Wilfred biſhop of York by proxy. Theodore, who preſided in this ſynod, produced a copy of the canons which he had brought with him from Rome, and pointed out ten of them which were peculiarly neceſſary to be obſerved, in order to eſtabliſh a perfect uniformity among all the Engliſh churches; to which he demanded, and obtained, the conſent of all the members [51]. Council of Hartford.

[50] Bed. l. 4. c. 2.
[51] Id. l. 4. c. 5. Spelman. Concil. t. 1. p. 152.

Beſides

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Auricular confeſſion introduced.

Beſides this union among the Engliſh churches, and conformity to the church of Rome, which was brought about by Theodore, with the conſent and authority of the Engliſh kings, this prelate introduced ſeveral new doctrines and practices that were formerly unknown. One of the moſt important of theſe innovations was the introduction of auricular confeſſion to a prieſt, as neceſſary to abſolution: directly contrary to the doctrine of the Scotch miſſionaries, who taught, that confeſſion to God was ſufficient [52].

Theodore exerciſeth his metropolitical authority.

Theodore having, by his own addreſs, and the favourable diſpoſition of the Engliſh princes of that time, obtained a tacit recognition of his own metropolitical power over all the Engliſh churches, began to exerciſe it with no little ſeverity, by depoſing Winfred biſhop of the Mercians, A. D. 676, for ſome ſlight act of diſobedience to his authority, which is not mentioned [53]. In his room he conſecrated Sexulf, founder of the abbey of Peterborough, and about the ſame time raiſed Erconwald to the ſee of London [54].

New biſhoprics erected.

By the ninth canon of the council of Hartford, it was propoſed, that new biſhoprics ſhould be erected where they were moſt wanted: but though this was one of the moſt reaſonable regulations in the whole collection, the biſhops, dreading the diminution of their power and wealth by the diviſion of their biſhoprics, did

52 Egberti Inſtitut. Eccleſ. p. 281.
53 Bed. l. 4. c. 6.
54 Id. ibid.

not

not conſent to its immediate execution, but referred it to more mature conſideration [55]. Till about this time, there was but one biſhopric in each of the ſix kingdoms of the heptarchy which had embraced the Chriſtian religion, except that of Kent, which had two. Some of theſe biſhoprics were of very great extent; particularly that of York, which comprehended all the countries between the Humber and the frith of Forth. Wilfred biſhop of that ſee, naturally vain and oſtentatious, exceeded even the kings of thoſe times in magnificence and expence; which excited the indignation of his ſovereign Egfred king of Northumberland. This prince, in order to humble the pride of this haughty prelate, as well as for the good of his ſubjects, reſolved to divide his enormous biſhopric; and two new biſhops, Boſa and Eata, were conſecrated by Theodore for the Northumbrian territories [56]. Wilfred was not of a temper to ſit down tamely with this diminution of his revenues and authority: he repaired to court, and boldly accuſing the king and archbiſhop of injuſtice, appealed from them to the pope: a thing ſo new and unheard of, that it excited a loud laugh in all who were preſent, who could not believe him to be ſerious [57]. But this eccleſiaſtical knight-errant ſoon convinced them, that he was in earneſt; by ſetting out on his journey to

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55 Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 153.
56 Bed. l. 4. c. 12.
57 Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 24.

Cent. VII. Rome, accompanied by a prodigious crowd of monks, who reſolved to follow his fortunes[58]. After his departure, Boſa was fixed at York, and Eata at Lindisfarne; and not long after two more biſhops were conſecrated for the Northumbrian kingdom, Tunberet and Trumwin; of whom the former was fixed at Hexam, and the latter at Abercorn, which was then within the kingdom of Northumberland[59]. Wilfred, after meeting with many ſtrange adventures in his journey, arrived at Rome, and preſented a petition to pope Agatho, in a council of fifty biſhops and abbots then ſitting, repreſenting the injury which had been done him by Theodore, in diſmembering his biſhopric without his conſent, and praying for redreſs This petition, from ſo diſtant a corner of the church, was received with uncommon favour by the pope and council; who made a decree, reſtoring Wilfred to his ſee, and ordering thoſe who had been thruſt into it to be expelled. With this decree Wilfred haſtened back into England, and preſented it to Egfred king of Northumberland; who was ſo far from reſtoring him to his biſhopric, that he committed him to priſon. So little were the decrees of Rome at that time regarded in England[60].

Council of Hatfield. About the ſame time the pope ſent John, precentor of St. Peter's, into England, to examine

[58] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 25. [59] Bed. l. 4. c. 12.
[60] Bed. l. 4. c. 13. Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 160.

the

the ſentiments of the Engliſh churches concerning the hereſy of the Monothelites, which made a mighty noiſe. Theodore, to ſatisfy the pope in this particular, ſummoned a ſynod to meet at Hatfield, September 15, A. D. 680; in which a confeſſion of the faith of the church of England, (which was perfectly orthodox), was drawn up, and tranſmitted to Rome[61]. The legate had alſo a private commiſſion to promote the reſtoration of Wilfred to his biſhopric, and his reconciliation with Theodore; but in this he had no ſucceſs. Cent. VII.

The biſhopric of Mercia, which was ſeated at Litchfield, and comprehended all the dominions of the Mercian kings, was diſmembered about this time; and out of it no fewer than four new biſhoprics were erected, viz. thoſe of Worceſter, Leiceſter, Hereford, and Sydnaceſter[62]. New biſhoprics erected.

When Wilfred, the ejected biſhop of York, had continued near a year in priſon, he obtained his liberty, by the earneſt interceſſion of Æbbe abbeſs of Coldingham, and aunt to king Egfred, upon this condition, That he ſhould immediately abandon the territories of Northumberland[63]. But the reſentment and influence of Egfred were ſo great, that the unhappy Wilfred could find no ſhelter in any of the Chriſtian kingdoms of the heptarchy, which obliged him to retire into the little kingdom of Kingdom of Suſſex converted by Wilfred.

[61] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 168.
[62] Higden. Polychron. p. 241.
[63] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 31.

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Suſſex, which was ſtill unconverted. Here he met with a very kind reception from Ethelwalch, the reigning king, and Æbæ his queen, who were both Chriſtians, and gave all poſſible encouragement to him and his companions to preach the goſpel to their ſubjects, who were Pagans. Wilfred, by his learning and eloquence, aſſiſted by the influence of the king and queen, perſuaded many of the nobility to embrace the Chriſtian religion, while his companions were no leſs ſucceſsful among the common people. To reward and encourage Wilfred and his fellow-labourers, the king beſtowed upon him a conſiderable tract of country in the peninſula of Selſey, with all the cattle and ſlaves upon it; where he built a monaſtery, and founded a biſhop's ſee, which was afterwards removed to Chicheſter [64]. While Wilfred reſided in theſe parts, he was the inſtrument, by the miniſtry of ſome of his followers, of converting the inhabitants of the iſle of Wight, and obtained a grant of the third part of that iſland, from Ceadwalla king of Weſſex [65]. In this manner was the laſt of the ſeven Saxon ſtates in England brought into the boſom of the Chriſtian church, about ninety years after the arrival of Auſtin, and a little before the end of the ſeventh century.

Continuation of Wilfred's hiſtory.

The ſucceſs of Wilfred in the converſion of the South-Saxons regained him the favour and

[64] Bed. l. 4. c. 13.

[65] Id. c. 16.

friendſhip

friendſhip of Theodore archbiſhop of Canterbury, who recommended him, in the warmeſt manner, to Ethelred king of Mercia, and to Alfred, who had ſucceeded his brother Egfred in the kingdom of Northumberland, A. D. 685[66]. This laſt prince having no perſonal enmity againſt Wilfred, permitted him to return into his dominions, A. D. 687, and beſtowed upon him the biſhopric of Hexam, which was then vacant; to which (if we may believe Eddius, the writer of his life), he afterwards added the ſee of York, and monaſtery of Rippon[67]. But this ambitious and reſtleſs prelate ſoon forfeited the favour and incurred the diſpleaſure of king Alfred, by refuſing to ſubſcribe the canons of the councils of Hartford and Hatfield, and by daily advancing claims to thoſe immenſe poſſeſſions which he had when he was ſole biſhop of the Northumbrian kingdom, and held beſides, no fewer than twelve abbeys. In the proſecution of thoſe claims, which could not be granted, he at length became ſo clamorous and turbulent, that king Alfred was provoked to expel him out of his dominions, about five years after his return. Upon this ſecond expulſion, Wilfred retired into Mercia, where he was kindly received by king Ethelred, who beſtowed upon him the vacant ſee of Leiceſter; where we muſt leave him for a little[68]. Cent. VII.

[66] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 42.
[67] Id. c. 43.
[68] Id. c. 44.

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Actions and death of Theodore.

Theodore archbiſhop of Canterbury died in the twenty-third year of his pontificate, and eighty-ninth of his age, A. D. 690[69]. After this ſee had remained two years vacant, it was filled by Brightwald, an Engliſh monk, who governed it thirty-eight years and ſix months[70]. Theodore was certainly one of the greateſt men that ever filled the chair of Canterbury. By his influence, all the Engliſh churches were united, and brought to a perfect uniformity in diſcipline and worſhip;—too large biſhoprics were divided, and many new ones erected;—great men were encouraged to build pariſh-churches, by declaring them and their ſucceſſors patrons of thoſe churches[71];—a regular proviſion was made for the clergy in all the kingdoms of the heptarchy, by the impoſition of a certain tax or kirk-ſhot upon every village, from which the moſt obſcure ones were not exempted[72]. By theſe and other wiſe regulations introduced by this great prelate, the church of England became a regular compact body, furniſhed with a competent number of biſhops and inferior clergy, under their metropolitan the archbiſhop of Canterbury.

Monaſteries of the ſeventh century.

In the courſe of the ſeventh century, many monaſteries were founded in all parts of England. Theſe monaſteries were at firſt deſigned,

[69] Godwin de Præſul Angl. p. 61.
[70] Id. ibid.
[71] Bed. Ed. Wheelock, p. 399.
[72] Bed. Epiſt. ad Egberet. p. 307.

in

in ſome places, for the ſeats of biſhops and their clergy; in others, for the reſidence of ſecular prieſts, who preached and adminiſtered the ſacraments over all the neighbouring country; and in all places they were ſeminaries of learning for the education of youth. No vows of celibacy or poverty were required of the prieſts who inhabited theſe monaſteries; though towards the end of this century, celibacy was ſtrongly recommended to the Engliſh monks and clergy, by Theodore in his Penitentials [73]. Theſe monaſteries being generally well built and well endowed, were by far the moſt comfortable places of reſidence in thoſe times; which engaged ſuch numbers of perſons of all ranks and characters to crowd into them, that they ſoon became intolerable grievances [74]. The fondneſs of the monaſtic life was very much increaſed by an impious doctrine, which began to be broached about the end of this century, "That as ſoon as any perſon put "on the habit of a monk, all the ſins of his "former life were forgiven [75]." This engaged many princes and great men (who have ſometimes as many ſins as their inferiors), to put on the monaſtic habit, and end their days in monaſteries. Cent. VII.

Superſtition, in various forms, made great progreſs in the ſeventh century; particularly an extravagant veneration for relics, in which the Superſtitions introduced.

73 Theod. Pœnitent. p. 7.
74 Bed. Epiſt. ad Egberet.
75 Theod. Capit. Labb. Concil. t. 6. col. 1875.

Cent. VII.

Romiſh prieſts drove a very gainful trade, as few good Chriſtians thought themſelves ſafe from the machinations of the devil, unleſs they carried the relics of ſome ſaint about their perſons; and no church could be dedicated without a decent quantity of this ſacred trumpery[76]. Stories of dreams, viſions, and miracles, were propagated without a bluſh by the clergy, and believed without a doubt by the laity[77]. Extraordinary watchings, faſtings, and other arts of tormenting the body, in order to ſave the ſoul, became frequent and faſhionable; and it began to be believed, that a journey to Rome was the moſt direct road to heaven[78].

State of the Britiſh and Scotch churches.

We know of no important changes that happened in the Britiſh churches in the ſeventh century; during which they had little or no communication either with Rome or Canterbury, but continued to adhere to their ancient doctrines and primitive modes of worſhip. Some of the Britons, particularly thoſe of Cornwall, it is ſaid, were converted to the Catholic Eaſter about the end of this century, by the writings of Aldhelm, afterwards biſhop of Sherburn; but it is probable, that the victorious arms of the Weſt-Saxon kings contributed as much to this converſion as the writings of that prelate[79]. The churches of the Scots and Picts were in the ſame ſituation with thoſe of the Britons in the

[76] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 99. 104.
[77] Vide Bed. paſſim.
[78] Id. ibid.
[79] Bed. l. 5. c. 16.

ſeventh

ſeventh century; unconnected with the churches of Rome and England, they perſevered in their ancient uſages with the greateſt conſtancy. Adamnan abbot of Iona having been ſent ambaſſador to Alfred king of Northumberland, about the end of this century, was converted to the Catholic Eaſter, and after his return laboured with much earneſtneſs, and ſome ſucceſs, to convert his countrymen [80]. Cent. VII.

SECTION III.

Hiſtory of Religion in Great Britain, from A. D. 700 *to* A. D. 800.

THE peace of the church of England was again diſturbed in the beginning of the eighth century by the famous Wilfred, ejected biſhop of York. This turbulent prelate was far from being contented with the ſee of Leiceſter beſtowed upon him by the king of Mercia, but made unwearied efforts to recover his former high ſtation and great poſſeſſions in the kingdom of Northumberland; which ſtill more inflamed the reſentment of king Alfred. This prince, with Brithwald archbiſhop of Canterbury, aſſembled a ſynod of Engliſh biſhops and clergy A. D. 701; to which they invited Wilfred, reſolving to prevail upon him, either by perſuaſions Cent. VIII. The hiſtory of Wilfred continued.

[80] Bed. l. 5. c. 16.

or

Cent. VIII. or threats, to retire into a private ſtation. He appeared before the ſynod; but treated all their perſuaſions and threats with equal ſcorn; upon which he was deprived of all his preferments, except the abbey of Rippon, which was left him for a retreat. Wilfred proteſted againſt this ſentence, and appealed to the pope; which ſo incenſed king Alfred againſt him, that he would have commanded his guards to cut him in pieces, if the biſhops had not interpoſed [1]. Theſe prelates, however, were ſo much diſpleaſed with the refractory behaviour of Wilfred, that they inflicted upon him the higheſt cenſures of the church; and both he and his followers were held in ſuch execration, that if any of them made the ſign of the croſs on the diſhes upon a table (a ceremony then uſed before meat), they were immediately thrown to the dogs [2]. The condemned excommunicated prelate departed from Oneſterfield, where the ſynod was held, into Mercia, in order to diſcover what impreſſion theſe proceedings had made on the mind of king Ethelred. After complaining to that prince of the injuſtice which had been done him, he earneſtly requeſted to know, whether or not he deſigned to deprive him of the revenues of the biſhopric and monaſteries which he had given him in his dominions? To which he received this favourable anſwer, That he would not de-

[1] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 202. Eddii Vita Wilfredi, p. 76. c. 46.
[2] Id. c. 47.

prive

prive him of theſe revenues until the final ſentence of the pope was known[3]. Encouraged by this aſſurance, he ſet out on his journey to Rome, where he arrived A. D. 702; and falling upon his knees, preſented his petition to the pope; addreſſed, "To the Apoſtolic Lord, the thrice-"bleſſed and univerſal biſhop, pope John;" and couched in the moſt flattering and artful terms. Wilfred was very graciouſly received, and lodged and entertained, with all his followers, at the public expence. The archbiſhop had alſo ſent deputies to Rome, to defend the ſentence of the ſynod, who were not received with equal favour. Theſe deputies accuſed Wilfred of refuſing to ſubſcribe the canons of the two ſynods of Hartford and Hatfield; to which he replied, that he was willing to ſubſcribe the canons of thoſe ſynods, as far as they were agreeable to the canons of the church of Rome, and the will of the pope. The deputies accuſed him further of being guilty of refuſing to ſubmit to the ſentence of his metropolitan and his biſhops in the ſynod of Oneſterfield, and of appealing to a foreign judge, which by the laws of England was a capital crime. But though this was a crime in England, it appeared a moſt meritorious act at Rome. After both parties had pleaded their cauſe at full length, and the pope had taken ſome time to conſider of it, with a council which was then ſitting, a day was ap- Cent. VIII.

[3] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, p. 76. c. 47.

Cent. VIII. pointed for pronouncing ſentence. When that day arrived, the pope appeared in great ſtate, ſurrounded by the council of biſhops; and both parties being preſent, pronounced his ſentence; reverſing that of the ſynod of Oneſterfield, and declaring Wilfred entirely innocent of all the crimes laid to his charge. With this ſentence, Wilfred returned in triumph into England, was reconciled to Brightwald archbiſhop of Canterbury, and kindly received by Ethelred king of Mercia. But king Alfred, and his immediate ſucceſſor Eadwulf, treated the papal ſentence with contempt, and would not permit Wilfred to enter their dominions [4].

Hiſtory of Wilfred finiſhed.

Though Wilfred had been thus repulſed by theſe two kings of Northumberland, he never relinquiſhed his pretenſions in that kingdom; and his hopes of making theſe pretenſions good began to revive on the acceſſion of Ofred, a child of eight years of age, to that throne, A. D. 704. By his intereſt with the archbiſhop, and with Berechtfred, who had the chief direction of affairs in the kingdom of Northumberland, he procured a council to be called in the north, for the final determination of all thoſe diſputes, which had ſubſiſted almoſt forty years, and had occaſioned infinite trouble to himſelf and to his country. This council, which was very numerous, was held in the open air on the banks of the river Nidd in Yorkſhire, A. D.

4 Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 45—58.

705.

705. Archbiſhop Brightwald, who preſided in it, laid before the council a copy of the pope's ſentence in favour of Wilfred, with his letter to the late king Alfred, requiring the reſtitution of his dignities and poſſeſſions in Northumberland, with which that prince had not complied; and aſked the members of the council, what they thought was moſt proper to be done for terminating theſe long and fatal diſputes? The biſhops at firſt diſcovered no diſpoſition to comply with the pope's ſentence; who, they ſaid, had no right to reverſe the ſentence of an Engliſh ſynod, or to lay any commands on an Engliſh king. But at length, by the intreaties of Brightwald, Berechtfred, Ælfleda, abbeſs of Whitby, and others, this tedious affair was compromiſed in this manner: John of Beverly, biſhop of Hexham, was tranſlated to York, which was then vacant; and the biſhopric of Hexham, with the abbey of Rippon, were beſtowed on Wilfred; with which he remained contented. This famous prelate ſurvived that deciſion only about four years; and dying A. D. 709, at his monaſtery of Oundle at Nottinghamſhire, he was buried with great funeral pomp at his abbey of Rippon in Yorkſhire[s]. Wilfred was certainly one of the moſt extraordinary men of the age in which he lived. On the one hand, he was graceful in his perſon, engaging in his manners, learned, eloquent, and regular in his conduct, Cent. VIII.

[s] Eddii Vita Wilfredi, c. 58—65.

which

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which gained him many powerful friends; but on the other hand, he was ambitious, reſtleſs, and inflexible, which raiſed him up no leſs powerful enemies, and involved both himſelf and his country in perpetual broils.

Several kings become monks.

The humour of making pilgrimages to Rome, and of retiring into monaſteries, ſtill increaſing, Coinred king of Mercia laid down his ſceptre, and took up the pilgrim's ſtaff, A. D. 709, and travelled to Rome, accompanied by Offa, a young prince of the royal family of the Eaſt-Saxons, where they both became monks[6]. Not long after, Ina, the victorious king of the Weſt-Saxons, imitated their example, and ended his life in a cloiſter at Rome, where he founded a houſe for the entertainment of Engliſh pilgrims and the education of Engliſh youth[7]. This prince, and his cotemporary Withred king of Kent, were great friends to the clergy, and made ſeveral laws for the ſecurity of their perſons, privileges, and revenues[8].

State of the church of England at the death of venerable Bede.

The churches of the ſeveral Engliſh kingdoms enjoyed ſo much internal peace for many years after the death of Wilfred, that they furniſh few materials of importance for their eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; which for a long time conſiſts of little more than the names and ſucceſſion of biſhops in the ſeveral ſees; with which it would be improper to ſwell this work. When the venerable

[6] Bed. l. 5. c. 19. [7] Chron. Saxon. p. 53.
[8] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 182—199.

hiſtorian

hiſtorian Bede concludes his excellent hiſtory of the church of England A. D. 731, he acquaints us, that it was then governed by ſixteen biſhops, who had their ſeats at the following places:— Canterbury, Rocheſter, London, Dunwich, Helmham, Wincheſter, Sherburn, Litchfield, Leiceſter, Hereford, Worceſter, Sydnaceſter, York, Holy Iſland, Hexham, and Withern[9]. There was no biſhop in the little kingdom of Suſſex at this time; but Sigelm was conſecrated biſhop of Selſey a few years after; which made the number of biſhops in England, before the middle of the eighth century, ſeventeen[10]. Cent. VIII.

Upon the death of Wilfred, the ſecond biſhop of York, A. D. 731, Egbert, brother to Eadbert king of Northumberland, was advanced to that ſee. This prelate, by his royal birth and great merit, recovered the dignity of a metropolitan, which had been enjoyed by Paulinus the firſt biſhop of York, and obtained a pall from Rome as a badge of that dignity. Egbert archbiſhop of York.

Nothelmus archbiſhop of Canterbury dying A. D. 740, Cuthbert biſhop of Hereford was tranſlated to that ſee. An intimate friendſhip had long ſubſiſted between Cuthbert and his countryman Winfred, who had aſſumed the name of *Boniface*, and was become archbiſhop of Mentz. As ſoon as Boniface received the news of the advancement of his friend to the primacy Letter of Boniface archbiſhop of Mentz to Cuthbert archbiſhop of Canterbury

[9] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 23. [10] Godwin de Præſul p. 548.
[11] Id. t. 2. p. 14.

of

Cent. VIII. of England, he wrote him a very long letter; in which, after many profeſſions of eſteem and friendſhip, and moſt vehement exhortations to the faithful diſcharge of the duties of his high office, he points out ſeveral things in the ſtate of the church of England which required reformation; particularly the gaudy dreſs and intemperate lives of the clergy; the ſacrilege of great men in ſeizing the government of monaſteries, and obliging the monks to perform the moſt ſervile work in building their caſtles, &c.; a thing unknown in any other part of the Chriſtian world. He exhorts him alſo to put a ſtop to the nuns, and other good ladies of England, leaving their country, and going in pilgrimage to Rome; becauſe they were generally debauched before they returned, and many of them became common proſtitutes in the cities of France and Italy. To remedy all theſe evils, he adviſes him to call a council, and for his direction ſends him a copy of the canons of a ſynod, which had been lately held at Mentz, in which he had preſided in quality of the pope's legate. For as Boniface had received his preferment in the church by the favour of the pope, he was a zealous advocate for his ſupremacy, and had contributed very much to bring the churches of Germany under the obedience of the ſee of Rome; and ſeems to wiſh that his friend Cuthbert would act the ſame part in England [12].

[12] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 237.

This

This letter, it is probable, engaged Cuthbert to aſſemble a council of the biſhops and chief clergy of his province, which met at Cloveſhoos, or Clyff, in Kent, A. D. 747. Edelbald king of Mercia, with all the great men of his court, Cuthbert archbiſhop of Canterbury, with eleven biſhops of his province, together with many abbots, abbeſſes, and other clergy, were preſent at this council; in which no fewer than thirty canons were made for the reformation of the lives of the clergy of all ranks, and the regulation of all the affairs of the church of England. The canons of this council, which were for the moſt part taken from thoſe of the council of Mentz, tranſmitted by Boniface, contain many wiſe and judicious regulations, conſidering the age in which they were made. It is, however, very worthy of our attention, that the council of Cloveſhoos made a very important alteration in the canon concerning the unity of the church. The canon of the council of Mentz on this ſubject runs thus:—"We have agreed in our ſynod "in the confeſſion of the catholic faith, and "agreed to continue in unity and ſubjection to "the church of Rome; and deſire to be ſub-"ject to St. Peter and his vicar, to the end of "our lives, that we may be eſteemed members "of that church committed to St. Peter's "care[13]." But the canon of the council of Cloveſhoos was couched in the following general

Cent. VIII. Council of Cloveſhoos.

[13] Lab. Concil. t. 6. col. 1544.

Cent. VIII. terms, without ſo much as mentioning the church or biſhop of Rome: "That ſincere love and "Chriſtian unity and affection ought to be "amongſt all the clergy in the world, in deed "and judgment (without flattery of any one's "perſon), as the ſervants of one Lord, and "fellow-labourers in the ſame goſpel: ſo that "however ſeparated by the diſtance of place, "they may notwithſtanding be united in the "ſame judgment, and ſerve God in one ſpirit, "in the ſame faith, hope, and charity; daily "praying for each other, that every one may "faithfully perſevere to the end, in the diſ-"charge of his holy function [14]." This remarkable caution in the language of this canon, is a ſufficient proof, that the clergy of England were not as yet diſpoſed to bend their necks to the intolerable and ignominious yoke of Rome. So careful were they in this council to guard againſt the incroachments of the pope on the independency of the church of England, that applications to Rome for advice in difficult caſes were diſcouraged by the twenty-fifth canon, and biſhops directed to apply only to their metropolitan in a provincial ſynod [15]. Many excellent advices are given to the biſhops, clergy, and people, in the canons of this council. Biſhops are directed to viſit all parts of their dioceſes once every year, for preaching and performing the other duties of their ſacred function;—to keep a watchful eye

[14] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 246. [15] Id. ibid.

over

over the conduct of the inferior clergy, who ſtill, for the moſt part, lived in monaſteries;—and to be very careful in examining into the morals and learning of thoſe whom they admitted into holy orders. Abbots are commanded to take care that the clergy, in their reſpective houſes, ſhould be ſtudious, ſober, and decent in their dreſs and deportment. The clergy are injoined to be diligent in viſiting, preaching, and baptizing; to learn to conſtrue in their own language the creed and Lord's prayer, and the words uſed in the celebration of maſs, and in the office of baptiſm. The people are exhorted,—to get the creed and Lord's prayer by heart,—to the religious obſervation of the Lord's day,—to frequent communion, to confeſſion, faſting, and almſgiving. Several very ſingular directions are given in the twenty-ſeventh canon, to the common people who did not underſtand Latin, about the manner of their joining in the public prayers and ſongs of the church, which were all in that language: in particular, they are allowed to affix any meaning to the words they pleaſed in their own minds, and to pray in their hearts for any thing they wanted, no matter how foreign to the real ſenſe of the public prayers[16]. A curious ſalvo for the abſurd practice of praying in an unknown tongue! This canon alſo contains the following ſhort form of prayer for the dead: "Lord, ac- "cording to the greatneſs of thy mercy, grant

Cent. VIII.

[16] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 246.

Cent. VIII. "reſt to his ſoul, and for thy infinite pity vouch-
"ſafe to him the joys of eternal light with thy
"ſaints." About this time, ſome great men, who were not very fond of going through the faſtings and prayers injoined them by their confeſſors, propoſed to hire poor people to faſt and pray in their ſtead. This was certainly a very lucky thought; but it had not the good fortune to meet with the approbation of this council.

Quarrels about the bodies of the archbiſhops.

Cuthbert archbiſhop of Canterbury died A. D. 758. All his predeceſſors had been interred by the monks of St. Auguſtin, in their monaſtery, without the walls of Canterbury, who now conſidered the corpſes of their departed prelates as a kind of perquiſite to which they had a right. Cuthbert, for what reaſon we know not, formed the deſign of depriving them of his remains; and for that purpoſe obtained a formal permiſſion from Eadbert king of Kent, to be buried in his own cathedral. When he found his end approaching, he directed his domeſtics to put his body into the grave as ſoon as he expired, and before they publiſhed his death; which they accordingly performed. When the monks of St. Auguſtin, on hearing of the archbiſhop's death, came in ſolemn proceſſion to take poſſeſſion of his remains, they were told, that he was already buried; at which they were ſo provoked, that they called him a rogue, a fox, a viper, and all the opprobrious names they could invent [17].

[17] Godwin de Præſul. Ang. p. 65.

Bregwin

Bregwin, who was a native of Saxony, but educated in England, was placed in the archiepiſcopal chair, when it had been about a year vacant; and he filled it only three years, dying Auguſt 24, A. D. 762. By his own direction, he was buried in the ſame place, and in the ſame precipitate manner with his predeceſſor. When Lambert abbot of St. Auguſtin's came with a body of armed men to ſeize the body of the archbiſhop as his lawful property, and found himſelf anticipated a ſecond time, he took the matter in a very ſerious light, and made a ſolemn appeal to the pope, to interpoſe his authority for preventing ſuch clandeſtine funerals for the future. This mighty buſtle about the lifeleſs bodies of theſe prelates may appear to us ridiculous; but the monks of St. Auguſtin knew very well what they were about, and how much it redounded to the reputation and intereſt of their ſociety to be in poſſeſſion of the remains of thoſe primates, in that ſuperſtitious age, when relics were the moſt valuable treaſures. The canons of Chriſt's church, who had the privilege of chuſing the archbiſhop, and had been concerned in ſmuggling their two late ones into their graves, were ſo much alarmed at Lambert's appeal to the pope againſt them, that, in order to mitigate his zeal in the cauſe of their rivals, they choſe him to fill the vacant chair. This artful conduct had its deſired effect: Lambert was appeaſed, and deſiſted from proſecuting his appeal [18].

Cent. VIII.

[18] Godwin de Præſul. Ang. p. 65.

Cent. VIII.

The pope obtains a great acceſſion of power and territories.

About the middle of the eighth century, ſeveral great and ſudden revolutions happened in Italy, and in the ſtate of the church of Rome, which in their conſequences very much affected all the Chriſtian world. Though the emperors of the eaſt, who reſided at Conſtantinople, were nominal ſovereigns of Rome and Italy; the diſtance of their ſituation, and other circumſtances, rendered their authority feeble and precarious. When the emperor Leo Iſaurus publiſhed his famous edict, A. D. 730, againſt the uſe and worſhip of images, commanding them to be removed out of the churches, the biſhops of Rome oppoſed the execution of that edict with great vehemence, and encouraged the chief cities of Italy to ſhake off all ſubjection to the emperors of the Eaſt. But they were ſoon puniſhed for this revolt by Aſtulphus king of Lombardy, who over-run the greateſt part of Italy, and threatened the deſtruction of the church of Rome. In this extremity, Stephen II. who was then pope, A. D. 752, earneſtly implored the protection of Pepin king of France; who marching at the head of a powerful army into Italy, A. D. 753, defeated Aſtulphus, and recovered all the countries which he had conquered. But inſtead of reſtoring thoſe countries to the emperors of the Eaſt, their ancient ſovereigns, he beſtowed the city and territories of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and ſeveral other cities, on the pope; which raiſed him from the very brink of ruin to be a powerful temporal prince, and enabled him and his ſucceſſors to proſecute their

their claims to ſpiritual dominion over the Chriſtian world with greater ſpirit and ſucceſs [19]. Cent. VIII.

Egbert, the firſt Engliſh archbiſhop of York, one of the beſt and moſt learned prelates of his age, after having governed that ſee with great dignity about thirty-ſix years, died A. D. 767; and was ſucceeded by Adelbert, who makes no diſtinguiſhed figure in hiſtory [20]. Death of Egbert archbiſhop of York.

While Lambert filled the archiepiſcopal chair of Canterbury, a conſiderable revolution happened in the government of the church of England. Offa king of Mercia, who was by far the moſt powerful prince of the heptarchy, thinking it inconvenient and diſhonourable for the biſhops of his kingdom to be ſubject to the metropolitical authority of the archbiſhops of Canterbury, reſolved to erect the ſee of Litchfield, his capital, into an archbiſhopric. Lambert oppoſed the execution of this deſign as much as poſſible; but Offa's ſuperior power and wealth at length prevailed, and Hegbert biſhop of Litchfield was declared an archbiſhop by the pope, A. D. 787; and the ſees of Worceſter, Hereford, Leiceſter, Sydnaceſter, Helmham, and Dunwich, diſmembered from the province of Canterbury, and put under the juriſdiction of the new archbiſhop. Hegbert, dying ſoon after his elevation, was ſucceeded by Adulph, who received a pall, Litchfield made the ſee of an archbiſhop.

19 Inett's Hiſt. Engl. Church, c. 12.
20 Godwin de Præſul. Ang. t. 2. p. 15.

Cent. VIII. the diſtinguiſhing badge of the archiepiſcopal dignity, from pope Adrian I. [21].

Council of Calcuith. The pope about this time ſent Gregory biſhop of Oſtia, and Theophilact biſhop of Todi, as his legates into England, to viſit the ſeveral Engliſh churches. Theſe legates acquainted the pope, by a letter, That they had arrived ſafe in England, and waited upon Lambert archbiſhop of Canterbury, and executed their commiſſion; which was, probably, to obtain his conſent to the diſmembering of his province:—That they had then repaired to the court of Offa king of Mercia; who received them with great joy, and very much approved of all they had propoſed:—That becauſe the country was very extenſive, in order to do their buſineſs with the greater expedition, they had ſeparated; Theophilact remaining in Mercia, to attend a great council of that kingdom; while Gregory proceeded to the court of Oſwald king of Northumberland; who alſo called a council of the nobility and chief clergy of his kingdom:—That they, the legates, had laid the regulations or canons which they had brought with them from Rome before both theſe councils; by whom they had been maturely conſidered, and univerſally approved, and ſubſcribed by the kings of Mercia and Northumberland, with all the chief nobility, biſhops, and clergy of England. The Mercian ſynod met at a place named *Calcuith*; which is the reaſon that theſe

[21] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 429.

regula-

regulations are commonly called *the canons of the council of Calcuith*[22]. Theſe canons, which are twenty in number, contain a kind of ſyſtem of the eccleſiaſtical politics of thoſe times, in which we may diſcern the clergy beginning to advance ſeveral new claims, ſuch as, a divine right to the tenth of all the poſſeſſions of the laity, and an exemption from being tried and puniſhed by the civil magiſtrates[23]. To ſupport this laſt claim, ſeveral texts of ſcripture are moſt ſhamefully miſinterpreted. The legates, after their arrival in England, obſerved ſeveral peculiarities which they diſapproved, and therefore prohibited in theſe canons; ſuch as,—the prieſts celebrating maſs without ſhoes or ſtockings, and with chalices made of horn;—the biſhops ſitting on the bench with the aldermen, and judging in civil and criminal cauſes;—and the people ſtill retaining many Pagan practices, as ſorceries, divinations, &c.[24] It is ſaid to have been in this council of Calcuith that Lambert archbiſhop of Canterbury gave his conſent to the erection of Litchfield into an archbiſhopric; but if this was true, it appears, that his pride was not abated by this great diminution of his power; for his name ſtands in the ſubſcription of the canons before that of Offa king of Mercia. Cent. VIII.

The great controverſy about the uſe of images in churches, and the degree of homage that was Controverſy about the worſhip of images.

[22] Spelman Concil. t. 1. p. 291. [23] Id. canon 11. 17.
[24] Id. canon 10. 3.

to

Cent. VIII. to be paid to them, which had raged with incredible violence on the continent for more than ſixty years, began to be agitated in England towards the end of this century. Two ſucceeding emperors of the Eaſt, Leo Iſaurus, and his ſon Conſtantine Copronimus, exerted all their power to prevent the worſhip, by aboliſhing the uſe of images in churches; while ſeveral ſucceeding popes, their cotemporaries, ſupported the cauſe of images with at leaſt equal zeal. In the Eaſt, the influence of the emperors at length prevailed; and both the uſe and adoration of images were condemned by a council of three hundred and thirty-eight biſhops, at Conſtantinople, A. D. 754[25]. But in the Weſt, the authority of the biſhops of Rome gained the aſcendant. Italy revolted from the emperors, images were retained, and too much regarded, not to ſay adored. When this controverſy ſeemed to be at an end in the Eaſt, and images were caſt out of almoſt all the churches, a great revolution happened at the death of the emperor Leo IV. by the adminiſtration falling into the hands of his widow the empreſs Irene, in the minority of her ſon. This princeſs (who was one of the worſt of women) formed the deſign of reſtoring the uſe and worſhip of images in the Eaſt; which ſhe communicated to pope Adrian, for his advice and aſſiſtance. When all matters were properly prepared, a council was ſummoned to meet

[25] Lab. Coun. t. 6. col. 1661.

at

at Conſtantinople, A. D. 786; but being prevented by a tumult from ſitting in that city, it met the year after at Nice. This council (which conſiſted of about one hundred and fifty biſhops, and is commonly called the ſecond council of Nice) reverſed the acts of the late council of Conſtantinople againſt images, and decreed both the uſe and adoration of them, with a few frivolous diſtinctions [26]. The acts of this council were received with great joy at Rome, and a copy of them ſent into France, where they did not meet with ſo favourable a reception; for though the churches of France allowed the uſe, they prohibited the worſhip of images, with great ſtrictneſs. Charlemagne king of France put theſe acts into the hands of a ſelect number of biſhops; who drew up an elaborate confutation of them, in four books, which were publiſhed in the king's name, and are commonly called the *Caroline books* [27]. Charlemagne ſent a copy of the canons of the council of Nice to his friend and ally Offa king of Mercia, to be communicated to the Engliſh biſhops; by whom they were condemned, "as containing many "things contrary to the true catholic faith, "eſpecially the worſhip of images, which the "catholic church utterly deteſted and abhorred [28]." The Engliſh biſhops employed their learned countryman Alcuinus to write

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[26] Du Pin, Eccleſ. Hiſt. cent. 8.
[27] Id. ibid.
[28] M. Weſtminſter, ad an. 793.

againſt

Cent. VIII. againſt this council; and tranſmitted his book, with their own opinion, to the king of France[29]. From this detail, it is ſufficiently evident, that though images and pictures had long been uſed in the churches of France and England, as ornaments, and helps to memory, theſe churches, at the end of the eighth century, were not arrived at that degree of folly and impiety as to pay them any kind of worſhip.

Sale of relics. The ſale of relics was now become a gainful trade to the clergy, and eſpecially to the monks, who were fortunate in making daily diſcoveries of the precious remains of ſome departed ſaint; which they ſoon converted into gold and ſilver. In this traffick they had all the opportunities they could deſire of impoſing counterfeit wares upon their cuſtomers, as it was no eaſy matter for the laity to diſtinguiſh the great toe of a ſaint from that of a ſinner, after it had been ſome centuries in the grave. The place where the body of St. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain, lay, is ſaid to have been diſcovered to Offa king of Mercia, in a viſion, A. D. 794; and was taken up with much ceremony in the preſence of three biſhops, and an infinite multitude of people of all ranks, and lodged in a rich ſhrine, adorned with gold and precious ſtones. To do the greater honour to the memory of the holy martyr, Offa built a ſtately monaſtery at the place where his body was found, which he called by his name, *St Alban's*,

[29] M. Weſtminſter, ad an. 793.

and

and in which he depoſited his remains, enriching it with many lands and privileges [30]. Cent. VIII.

Offa's journey to Rome.

Offa, who had been guilty of ſome very horrid crimes, became more and more ſuperſtitious as he advanced in years, and at length made a journey to Rome, where he ſquandered away a great deal of money, to procure the pardon of his ſins. In particular, he made a grant of three hundred and ſixty-five mancuſſes, being one mancus for each day in the year, to be diſpoſed of by the pope to certain charitable and pious uſes [31]. This grant was afterwards converted into an annual tax upon the Engliſh nation, and demanded in the moſt imperious manner as a lawful tribute, and mark of ſubjection of the kingdom of England to the church of Rome [32].

The ſee of Litchfield reduced to its former ſtate.

The ſee of Litchfield did not very long enjoy the honour of being an archbiſhopric. For king Offa dying ſoon after his return from Rome, A. D. 796, and his ſon Egfred in leſs than a year after, Kenulph, who ſucceeded this laſt prince, was prevailed upon to reſtore things to their former ſtate. Some pretend, that he was brought to form this reſolution by the addreſs of Athelard archbiſhop of Canterbury, a prelate of great abilities; but others imagine, with greater probability, that he was chiefly influenced by

[30] M. Paris Vita Offæ, p. 26. W. Malmſ. l. 1. c. 4.

[31] Anglia Sacra, l. 1. p. 460.

[32] Hen. Hunt. l. 4. R. Hoveden, pars prior. Inett's Church Hiſtory, c. 13.

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political conſiderations; and that he did this great favour to the ſee of Canterbury, in order to gain the affections of the people of Kent, who had lately become his tributaries[33]. However this may be, it is ſufficiently evident, that king Kenulph, with the conſent of the pope, reduced Adulphus archbiſhop of Litchfield to the ſtate of a private biſhop, and put him, and all the other biſhops of his kingdom, again under the metropolitical authority of the ſee of Canterbury; though Adulphus was indulged in the empty honour of wearing the pall of an archbiſhop as long as he lived.

General ſtate of religion in Britain in this century.

Ignorance and ſuperſtition increaſed greatly in the church of England, as well as in other parts of the Chriſtian world, in the courſe of the eighth century. Pilgrimages to Rome became far more frequent, and were attended with worſe effects than formerly;—the rage of retiring into monaſteries became more violent in perſons of all ranks, to the ruin of military diſcipline, and of every uſeful art;—the clergy became more knaviſh and rapacious, and the laity more abject and ſtupid, than in any former period. Of this the trade of relics, which can never be carried on but between knaves and fools, is a ſufficient evidence. The number of holidays, and of childiſh and trifling ceremonies, which are equally pernicious to honeſt induſtry and rational religion, were very much increaſed in the

33 Godwin de Præſul. Angliæ, p. 67. Inett's Church Hiſtory, c. 14.

courſe

courſe of this dark age. As the Britons, Scots, and Picts, had little or no intercourſe with Rome in this period; it is probable, that ſuperſtition had not made ſuch rapid progreſs amongſt them as amongſt the Engliſh. But we know ſo little of the eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of theſe three nations in this century, that we can produce nothing of certainty and importance on that ſubject, unleſs the converſion of the Scots and Picts to the Roman rule in celebrating Eaſter, which happened in this century, can be called important. Cent. VIII.

SECTION IV.

The hiſtory of Religion in Great Britain, from A. D. 800, *to* A. D. 900.

ATHELARD archbiſhop of Canterbury took a journey to Rome, A. D. 801, to obtain the formal conſent of the pope to the reunion of the province of Litchfield to that of Canterbury. He met with a very favourable reception, and eaſily obtained every thing he deſired, as it was one part of the papal policy to encourage applications to Rome, from all parts, and on all occaſions. The pope, to ſhew how highly he was pleaſed with Kenulph king of Mercia (who had wrote him a very reſpectful letter, accompanied with a preſent of one hundred and twenty mancuſſes), and with the archbiſhop, who had paid him Cent. IX. Archbiſhop Athelard's journey to Rome.

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him a viſit, ſent an anſwer to the king, in which that prince, and his primate, are flattered at a moſt unconſcionable rate, and loaded with the moſt extravagant praiſes. He calls the king his moſt dear, moſt excellent, and moſt ſweet ſon; and tells him, that the archbiſhop was ſuch an admirable prelate, that he was able to bring all the ſouls in his province from the very bottom of hell into the port of heaven [1].

Council of Cloveſhoos.

Athelard, after his return from Rome with this curious letter, ſummoned a council to meet at Cloveſhoos, A. D. 803; at which the decree of the pope, for reſtoring the ſee of Canterbury to all its ancient rights, was confirmed with great ſolemnity, and everlaſting damnation denounced againſt all who ſhould hereafter attempt to tear the coat of Chriſt, i. e. to divide the provinces of Canterbury [2]. The archbiſhop laid another decree of the pope's, againſt admitting laymen to the government of monaſteries, before this council; which was alſo confirmed, and ſubſcribed by him and his twelve ſuffragans, with ſeveral abbots and preſbyters [3]. This laſt decree was deſigned to put a ſtop to a practice which had long prevailed, of noblemen having the government of the monaſteries, and their ladies of the nunneries, on their eſtates, and to put thoſe foundations entirely into the hands of eccleſiaſtics; by which a great acceſſion, both of power and wealth, accrued to the church.

[1] Spelman Concil. t. 1. p. 322.
[2] Id. p. 324.
[3] Id. ibid.

Athelard

Athelard did not long ſurvive the reſtoration of his ſee to its ancient ſplendour; but dying A. D. 807, was ſucceeded by Wulfred, who had been a monk of Chriſt's church in Canterbury[4]. Cent. IX. Council of Ceale-hythe.

This prelate convened a council of all the biſhops, and many of the abbots and preſbyters of his province, at Ceale-hythe, July 27, A. D. 816; at which Kenulph king of Mercia, with the great men of his kingdom, were preſent. This council, in the preamble to its canons, is ſaid to have been called in the name, and by the authority of Jeſus Chriſt, the ſupreme head of the church; and the deſign of it is ſaid to have been, that the preſidents of the ſacred order, or biſhops, might treat with the abbots, prieſts, and deacons, concerning what was neceſſary and uſeful for the churches; which ſeems to intimate, that theſe inferior clergy were conſtituent members of this council[5]. The canons of this council are eleven in number; and ſome of them contain ſeveral curious particulars concerning the ſtate of religion in the church of England at this time. As the building of parochial churches was now become frequent, the ſecond canon preſcribes the manner of their conſecration, which is to be performed only by the biſhop of the dioceſe, who is to bleſs the holy water, and ſprinkle it on all things with his own hands, according to the directions in the book of rites. He is then to conſecrate the euchariſt, and to

4 Godwin de Præſul. Angl. p. 68. 5 Spel. Con. t. 1. p. 328.

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depoſit it, together with the relics, in the repoſitory provided for them. If no relics can be procured, the conſecrated elements may be ſufficient, becauſe they are the body and blood of Chriſt. Every biſhop in conſecrating a church is commanded to have the picture of the ſaint to whom the church is dedicated, painted on the wall, or on a board[6]. From the fourth canon it appears, that the Engliſh biſhops at this time, not only enjoyed their epiſcopal juriſdiction over all the monaſteries and nunneries in their dioceſes in its full extent, but had alſo authority to appoint the abbots and abbeſſes, with the conſent of the members of theſe ſocieties: a proof that all the exemptions from epiſcopal juriſdiction, ſaid to have been procured from the pope by ſeveral monaſteries before this time, are mere forgeries. By the fifth canon, we diſcover, that the members of this council had a moſt violent averſion to the Scotch clergy; for they decree, that no Scotſman ſhall be allowed to baptize, to ſay maſs, to give the euchariſt to the people, or perform any part of the ſacerdotal office; becauſe (ſays the canon) it is not known by whom theſe Scotſmen were ordained, or whether they were ordained or not, ſince they came from a country where there was no metropolitan, and where very little regard was paid to other orders. By the ſixth canon, the decrees of former councils which have been ſigned with the ſign of the

[6] Spel. Con. p. 328.

croſs,

croſs, are declared to be inviolable. By the ſeventh, biſhops and abbots are diſcharged from alienating any of their lands for more than one life, except it be to preſerve themſelves from famine, from ſlavery, or from the depredations of the enemy; by which is meant the Danes, who about this time grievouſly infeſted the coaſts of England, and were peculiarly terrible to the clergy. The tenth preſcribes what offices are to be performed at the death of a biſhop for the repoſe of his ſoul, viz. that the tenth part of all his moveable effects, both without and within doors, ſhall be given to the poor;—that all his Engliſh ſlaves ſhall be ſet at liberty;—that at the ſounding of the ſignal in the ſeveral pariſh-churches, the people of the pariſh ſhall repair to the church, and there ſay thirty pſalms for the ſoul of the deceaſed;—that every biſhop and abbot ſhall cauſe ſix hundred pſalms to be ſung, and one hundred and twenty maſſes to be celebrated, and ſhall ſet at liberty three ſlaves, and give each of them three ſhillings;—that all the ſervants of God ſhall faſt one day;—and that for thirty days immediately after divine ſervice in every church, ſeven belts of pater-noſters ſhall be ſung for him[7]. Theſe good biſhops did certainly right to provide for the repoſe of their ſouls after death; but whether this was the moſt effectual way of doing it, is not quite ſo clear.

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[7] Theſe belts or girdles had ſtuds for numbering the pater-noſters, as the roſaries or ſtrings of beads do at preſent.

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By the laſt canon of this council, prieſts are commanded, to uſe dipping, and not ſprinkling, in the celebration of baptiſm. Several other councils were held under this primate; but as they were convened rather for terminating private diſputes about the patrimony of the church, than for making general laws and regulations for its government, they merit little attention [8].

The clergy cruelly treated by the Danes.

Wulfred archbiſhop of Canterbury died A. D. 830, and Theogildus abbot of Chriſt's church was choſen in his room; who ſurvived his predeceſſor only about three months, and was ſucceeded by Celnoth deacon of the ſame church [9]. In the time of this primate, the heptarchy ended, and the Engliſh monarchy was eſtabliſhed by the illuſtrious Egbert king of the Weſt Saxons; though ſome princes after this bore the title of kings, and enjoyed ſome degree of authority, in Mercia, Northumberland, and other ſtates. This union of the ſeveral Engliſh ſtates into one potent kingdom was in many reſpects a happy event; and particularly to the church; becauſe the clergy were thereby delivered from the great inconveniency of being ſubject to different, and often contending ſovereigns. But the invaſions of the Danes, which about this time became more frequent and formidable than they had been before, more than overbalanced this advantage, and involved the Engliſh clergy in the

[8] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 331—336.
[9] Godwin de Præſul. Angl. p. 68.

moſt

moſt deplorable calamities. For the Danes being Pagans, as well as ſavages, and finding the monaſteries, in which the clergy generally reſided, better ſtored with booty and proviſions than other places, never failed to plunder them when it was in their power. In thoſe calamitous times, therefore, we cannot expect to meet with many councils aſſembled for making eccleſiaſtical laws and regulations. Great numbers of the clergy were put to the ſword, or buried in the ruins of their monaſteries; and the mildeſt fate they could expect when they fell into the hands of the Danes was to be ſold for ſlaves. This made many of the monks abandon a profeſſion which expoſed them defenceleſs to ſo many dangers; ſome of them becoming ſoldiers, and others purſuing other ways of life. Thoſe who ſtill adhered to their profeſſion after the deſtruction of the monaſteries in which they had reſided, retired into country-villages, and there performed the duties of their function to the people of the neighbourhood. By this means the deſtruction of the monaſteries, and diſperſion of the clergy by the Danes, became the occaſion of the building of many pariſh-churches, of which there were but very few in England before this time. This diſperſion of the clergy was productive alſo of a very important change in their manners and way of life. When great numbers of them had formerly lived together in one monaſtery, few of them were married, becauſe a collegiate life is on many accounts unfavourable to matrimony; but after they Cent. IX.

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they were diſperſed, and blended with the people, they generally embraced a married life, as moſt convenient and comfortable in their ſituation [10]. Theſe obſervations are ſo undeniably true, that before the end of this century there was hardly a monaſtery or a monk, and but few unmarried clergymen in England.

Ethelwolf's grant to the church.

Ethelwolf, the eldeſt ſurviving ſon of Egbert, the firſt monarch of England, who ſucceeded his father in the throne A. D. 837, had been deſigned for the church, and was actually a ſubdeacon in the cathedral of Wincheſter, if we may believe the author quoted below [11], when his father died. This prince did not forget his former friends and brethren of the clergy after his advancement to the throne, but continued to give them many ſubſtantial marks of his favour; of which the moſt conſiderable was, his famous grant of the tenth of all his lands to the church. The Chriſtian clergy in England, as well as in other countries, began pretty early to claim the tenth of every thing, as the proportion ſettled by the Levitical law for the maintenance of the miniſters of religion; but it required a long time, and many laws, both of church and ſtate, to make this claim effectual. In the ſeventh and eighth centuries, the Engliſh clergy had been ſupported,—by the produce of the lands which had been given to the church by kings, and other great men,—by a church ſcot or tax of one

[10] Inett's Church Hiſtory, c. 17. [11] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 200.

Saxon

Saxon penny on every houſe that was worth thirty Saxon pence of yearly rent,—and by the voluntary oblations of the people. Theſe funds, in times of plenty and tranquillity, were abundantly ſufficient; but in thoſe times of war and confuſion, when their houſes were burnt, and their ſlaves, who cultivated their lands, killed, or carried away by the Danes, when the church-ſcot could not be regularly levied, and when the voluntary oblations of the people failed, the clergy were reduced to great diſtreſs and indigence. Ethelwolf, who was a religious prince, and ſeems to have placed his chief hopes of being preſerved from that deſtruction with which he was threatened by the Danes in the prayers of the church, was deſirous of delivering the clergy from their preſent diſtreſs, and of providing more ample and certain funds for their future ſupport. With this view, he called an aſſembly of all the great men of his hereditary kingdom of Weſſex, both of the clergy and laity, at Wincheſter, in November A. D. 844; and, with their conſent, made a ſolemn grant to the church of the tenth part of all the lands belonging to the crown, free from all taxes and impoſitions of every kind, even from the three obligations, of building bridges, fortifying and defending caſtles, and marching out on military expeditions[12]. It was no doubt intended that this royal grant ſhould be imitated, and probably it was imitated, Cent. IX.

[12] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 200.

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by the nobility. In return for this noble donation, the clergy were obliged to perform ſome additional duties, viz. to meet with their people every Wedneſday in the church, and there to ſing fifty pſalms, and celebrate two maſſes, one for king Ethelwolf, and another for the nobility, who had conſented to this grant[13]. What immediate benefit the clergy reaped from this donation, we are not well informed; though it is probable, that it was not very great, as a regulation of this kind could hardly be carried into execution in thoſe diſtracted times.

Ethelwolf's journey to Rome.

Though the preſence of a prince with his people was never more neceſſary than in the reign of Ethelwolf, when his territories were every moment in danger of being invaded by the moſt cruel and deſtructive foes; yet this prince, prompted by the prevailing ſuperſtition of that age, left his kingdom in great confuſion, and went to Rome, A. D. 854; where he ſpent much money in preſents to the pope, the clergy, and the churches[14].

Further grant to the church.

After his return from Rome, he enlarged his former grant to the church, by extending it to the other kingdoms which now compoſed the Engliſh monarchy. This was done in a great council at Wincheſter, A. D. 855; at which, beſides Ethelwolf, Beorred, the tributary king of Mercia, and Edmund, the tributary king of Eaſt-Anglia, the two archbiſhops of Canterbury

[13] Anglia Sacra, t. 1, p. 200.

[14] Chron. Saxon. A. D. 854.

and

and York, with all the other biſhops, the nobility, and chief clergy of England, were preſent [15]. To give the greater force and ſolemnity to this donation, the charter containing the grant of it was preſented by king Ethelwolf, in the preſence of the whole aſſembly, on the altar of St. Peter the apoſtle, in the cathedral of Wincheſter; and all the biſhops were commanded to ſend a copy of it to every church in their reſpective dioceſes [16]. But notwithſtanding all theſe ſolemnities, we have good reaſon to believe the intention of this famous grant was in a great meaſure fruſtrated, by the vague indeterminate ſtrain in which it was conceived, and the deplorable confuſions which ſoon after followed. Cent. IX.

Calamities of the clergy, and their relief.

England was a ſcene of ſo much miſery and confuſion during the ſhort reigns of Ethelwolf's three eldeſt ſons, from A. D. 857 to A. D. 871, and the firſt ſeven years of the reign of his youngeſt ſon Alfred the Great, that little attention was given to eccleſiaſtical affairs. In this period the few remaining monaſteries which had eſcaped the former ravages of the Danes, were deſtroyed, and their wretched inhabitants put to the ſword, or burnt in the flames which conſumed the places of their abode [17]. But after the glorious victory which Alfred the Great obtained over the Danes A. D. 878, ſome ſtop was put to the horrid cruelties of thoſe barba-

[15] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 348. [16] Id. ibid.
[17] Ingulf. Hiſt. Croiland.

rians,

Cent. IX. rians, and to the intolerable ſufferings of the Engliſh clergy. For by the treaty of peace which followed that victory, it was ſtipulated, that Guthrum king of the Danes, and ſuch of his followers as choſe to remain in England, ſhould embrace the Chriſtian religion; and that thoſe who were not willing to comply with that condition ſhould immediately quit the kingdom. In conſequence of this article, Guthrum, with about thirty of his principal officers, were baptized in the preſence of king Alfred; and their example was ſoon after imitated by the greateſt part of their followers [18]. Theſe new Chriſtians had lands aſſigned them in the north of England; where they ſettled, and in time became peaceable and uſeful ſubjects. To ſecure the attachment of theſe new converts to the religion which they had embraced, king Alfred made certain laws for the regulation of their conduct, to which Guthrum and the other Daniſh chieftains gave their conſent. By the firſt of theſe laws, the Danes are commanded to abandon Paganiſm, and continue in the faith and worſhip of one true God. By the ſecond, a heavy fine is impoſed on thoſe who ſhould apoſtatize from Chriſtianity, and relapſe into Paganiſm. By the reſt of theſe laws, which are ſeventeen in number, the ſeveral vices to which the Danes were moſt addicted, are prohibited; the payment of tithes, the religious obſervation of the Lord's day, and of

[18] Aſſerius de Vita Elfred. p. 10.

other

other feſtivals, are commanded; and ſeveral directions are given, both to the clergy and laity [19]. Cent. IX.

Eccleſiaſtical laws of Alfred the Great.

Beſides the above conſtitutions, which were chiefly deſigned for the Danes, and the Engliſh among whom they lived, Alfred formed another body of laws for his other ſubjects, of which ſome related to the church. The introduction to theſe laws conſiſts of a copy of the ten commandments, in which the ſecond commandment, againſt the making and worſhipping of images, is omitted; but to make up the number, after the ninth, the following ſhort one is added, "Make thou not gods of gold or of ſilver:" a precept which very few were able to tranſgreſs. This omiſſion of the ſecond commandment ſhews, that images, which had been introduced into the church as ornaments, and helps to memory, were now become the objects of adoration: a change which might eaſily have been foreſeen. Alfred alſo adopted the canons of the apoſtolical council of Jeruſalem, recorded Acts xv. 29. into his eccleſiaſtical laws; and greatly magnifies that excellent precept of Chriſt, to do unto others as we would have others to do unto us. It is unneceſſary to give a very particular account of the reſt of theſe conſtitutions, as they contain few novelties. From one of them we learn, that about this time the clergy fell upon a curious device to raiſe the devotion of the people, and

[19] Spelm. Concil. t. 1. p. 375.

give

Cent. IX. give a myſterious ſolemnity to the rites of religion, in the holy time of Lent, by drawing a curtain before the altar when they celebrated maſs. But the people, it ſeems, did not like to be kept on the outſide of the curtain, and were apt to turn it aſide, or pull it down; which is therefore prohibited under a ſevere penalty. By another we are informed, that ſervants, but not ſlaves, were allowed forty-two days in the year to work for themſelves, and not for their maſters [20].

Alfred rebuilds monaſteries.

One of the firſt cares of the illuſtrious Alfred, after he had reſtored peace and proſperity to his afflicted country, was, to repair the ruined churches and monaſteries, and even to build new ones. But many of the old Engliſh monks having periſhed in the late troubles, and the riſing generation having contracted an averſion to that way of life, from the dreadful tales they had heard of their ſufferings, he was obliged to bring monks from France and other foreign countries [21]. When the peace was better eſtabliſhed, and their fears of the future invaſions of the Danes abated, many of the clergy who had abandoned their monaſteries to preſerve their lives, returned to the places from whence they had fled, took poſſeſſion of their lands, and began to repair their churches and habitations. But many of theſe clergymen having married in their retreats, they brought their wives and

[20] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 371. [21] Aſſerius Vita Elfred. p. 18.

children with them when they returned to their monaſteries; by which means the abbeys of England, in the end of this and the beginning of the next century, were generally poſſeſſed by a kind of ſecular or married monks [22]. This, as we ſhall ſoon ſee, became the occaſion of long and violent contentions in the church of England. Alfred the Great, after he had reſtored peace and good order to his country, ended his glorious life and reign in the laſt year of the ninth century. Cent. IX.

It would be improper to ſwell this work with a laborious collection of the unconnected ſcraps of the eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of the Britons, Scots, and Picts, in this century; out of which it is quite impoſſible to form any thing like a continued narration, ſupported by proper evidence. —— All that we know with certainty of the ſtate of religion among the ancient Britons in this period is, that all thoſe who preſerved their civil liberty, preſerved alſo their religious independency; and none of them were in communion with, or in ſubjection to, the church of England, who were not ſubject to ſome Engliſh prince. By living in this ſequeſtered ſtate, without much communication with other churches, they ſtill retained, for the moſt part, their ancient uſages, and were unacquainted with many innovations which had been imported from Rome into the church of England. Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of the Britons.

[22] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 602.

The

Cent. IX.

Of the Scots and Picts.

The Scots and Picts were very much in the ſame circumſtances with the Britons in this reſpect. Ever ſince the violent diſputes between the Scots and Engliſh of the Roman communion, about the time of keeping Eaſter, and the retreat of the Scotch Clergy out of England, there had been a violent animoſity between the churches of England and Scotland. This animoſity was very ſtrong in this century, as appears from the fifth canon of the council of Ceale-hythe, A. D. 816; which decrees, that no Scotch prieſt ſhall be allowed to perform any duty of his function in England[23]. The Scots and Picts were inſtructed and governed by their own clergy; who being educated at home, and having little intercourſe with foreign nations, retained much of the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the primitive times in their forms of worſhip. Theſe clergy were called *Kuldees*, both before and after this period: a name which ſome derive from the two Latin words, *Cultores Dei*, and others from the kills or cells in which they lived[24]. They were a kind of preſbyters, who lived in ſmall ſocieties, and travelled over the neighbouring countries, preaching, and adminiſtering the ſacraments. In each of theſe cells there was one who had ſome kind of ſuperintendancy over the reſt, managed their affairs, and directed their miſſions; but whether or not he enjoyed the title and authority of a

[23] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 329.

[24] Boeth. Hiſt. Scot. l. 6. Camb. Britan. col. 1468.

biſhop

biſhop in this period, is not certainly known. The council of Ceale-hythe ſeems to have ſuſpected that he did not; for the chief reaſons aſſigned by that council for refuſing to keep communion with theſe Scotch Kuldees were,—That they had no metropolitans amongſt them,—paid little regard to other orders,—and that the council did not know by whom they were ordained, i. e. whether they were ordained by biſhops or not [25]. The rectors or biſhops of the ſeveral cells of Kuldees were both choſen, and ordained, or conſecrated, by the members of theſe ſocieties; which was probably the very thing with which the council of Ceale-hythe was diſſatisfied. When the cells or monaſteries of Scotland came to be enlarged, better built, and better endowed, they were long after this poſſeſſed by theſe Kuldees, or ſecular clergy, who had the privilege of chuſing the biſhops in thoſe places where biſhops ſees were eſtabliſhed [26]. Cent. IX.

State of the Scotch biſhops.

The only biſhopric that was founded in Scotland in the ninth century was that of St. Andrew's; whoſe firſt biſhop, named *Adrian*, was killed by the Danes in the iſle of May, A. D. 872, and ſucceeded by Kellach, the ſecond biſhop of that ſee [27]. The other biſhops of Scotland in this century, and in former times, were not fixed to any particular dioceſe, and performed all the offices of their functions in all

[25] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 329. [26] Boeth. Hiſt. Scot. l. 10.
[27] Spottiſwood's Church Hiſt. p. 25, 26.

places

Cent. IX. places without diſtinction[28]. The number of theſe itinerant unſettled biſhops was probably very ſmall, as our moſt diligent antiquaries have not been able to collect the names of above ten or twelve of them in the ſpace of ſix centuries; and of theſe few ſome were foreigners, ſent into Scotland on particular occaſions, as Regulus, Palladius, Servanus; others were Scotchmen, who were biſhops in foreign countries, as Wiro, Plachelmus, &c.; and others were undeniably only ſuperintendants of ſocieties of Kuldees, as Columba, Adamnan, &c.[29]

Scotch councils.

We may very reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the kings both of the Scots and Picts held ſeveral councils in this and the preceding centuries, for the regulation of eccleſiaſtical affairs; but of theſe no monuments are now remaining, except ſome faint veſtiges of a council or aſſembly held by Kenneth Macalpin, the firſt monarch of the Scots and Picts, A. D. 850[30]. In this council ſeveral civil and eccleſiaſtical laws are ſaid to have been made. By one of theſe laſt it is decreed, that altars, churches, cells, oratories, images of ſaints, prieſts, and all perſons in holy orders, ſhall be held in great veneration. By another it is ordained, that all faſts, feſtivals, vigils, holidays, and ceremonies of every kind, which human piety had decreed to be kept in honour of king Chriſt, and his holy militia, ſhall

[28] Boeth. l. 10.

[29] See the table of Scotch biſhops at the end of Spottiſwood's Church Hiſtory.

[30] Fordun, l. 4. c. 8. Boeth. l. 10.

be

be ſtrictly obſerved. By a third it is declared to be a capital crime to do the leaſt injury to a prieſt, either by word or deed [31]. But we have good reaſon to ſuſpect the genuineneſs and antiquity of theſe canons, which were probably the work of a later age, when ſuperſtition and prieſtcraft had made greater progreſs in Scotland [32]. Cent. X.

SECTION V.

The hiſtory of Religion in Great Britain, from A. D. 900, *to* A. D. 1066.

THE tenth century (which is commonly called *the age of lead*) was the moſt dark and diſmal period of that long night of ignorance and ſuperſtition in which Europe was involved, after the fall of the Roman empire. It is difficult to determine whether the impudence of the clergy, or the credulity of the laity, were moſt remarkable in thoſe unhappy times; but it is certain, that the former could hardly invent any thing too abſurd for the latter to believe. Cent. X. Character of the tenth century.

England, which towards the end of the laſt century had been illuminated by ſome faint rays of knowledge, and enjoyed a ſhort interval of tranquillity, under the influence of the illuſtrious Alfred, in the beginning of this ſunk into the State of religion in England.

[31] Spelm. Con. p. 342.

[32] Sir David Dalrymple's Hiſtorical Memorials, p. 2. note.

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deepeſt darkneſs, and was involved in the greateſt confuſion. This aroſe from the wars occaſioned by a diſputed ſucceſſion—from the frequent revolts of the Danes ſettled in England, —and from the no leſs frequent invaſions of their countrymen from abroad. In the midſt of ſo many wars, it is no wonder that the intereſts of learning and religion were too much neglected.

Story of an interdict.

It was perhaps owing to this that king Edward the Elder, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Alfred, allowed ſome biſhoprics to continue vacant ſeveral years; for which, it is pretended, pope Formoſus laid both him and his kingdom under an interdict, A. D. 905[1]. This ſtory of the interdict, it muſt be confeſſed, is attended with ſuch difficulties as render it very doubtful, if not quite incredible. Pope Formoſus was in his grave eight years before the time of this pretended interdict; and the biſhops of Rome had not then become ſuch cruel audacious tyrants as to deprive whole kingdoms of the means of ſalvation for the fault of one man[2]. It is not improbable, that king Edward received an admonition from Rome; which the monkiſh hiſtorians in ſucceeding ages magnified into an interdict.

Edward fills the vacant ſees, and erects new ones.

However this may be, that prince, as ſoon as the exigencies of his affairs permitted, not only filled up all the vacant biſhoprics in his kingdom of Weſſex, but erected new ones, at Wells,

[1] W. Malmſ. l. 2. p. 26. [2] See Inett's Church Hiſt. c. 18.

at

at Kirton in Devonſhire, and at Padſtow in Cornwall; and Plegmund archbiſhop of Canterbury conſecrated no fewer than ſeven biſhops in one day, A. D. 909, viz. Fridſtan of Wincheſter, Wereſtan of Shereburn, Kenulp of Dorceſter, Beornock of Selſey, Athelm of Wells, Eadulph of Kirton, and Athelſtan of Padſtow[3]. Cent. X.

The Danes of Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland, who, with their leader Guthrum, had ſubmitted to king Alfred, and had embraced the Chriſtian religion, remained tolerably faithful to their new religion, and to their new ſovereign, during the life of that great prince; but after his death they apoſtatized from Chriſtianity, as well as rebelled againſt his ſon and ſucceſſor Edward. But having reduced theſe apoſtates and rebels to the neceſſity of ſubmitting to his authority, A. D. 909, he compelled them to return to the profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion, and to the obedience of thoſe laws which his father had preſcribed to their anceſtors about thirty years before[4]. Apoſtaſy and recovery of the Danes.

We meet with few eccleſiaſtical tranſactions of importance for near twenty years after this; when a great council was aſſembled at Gratanlea, A. D. 928, by king Athelſtan, in which Wulphelm archbiſhop of Canterbury preſided. This was one of thoſe mixed aſſemblies, ſo frequent in the Saxon times, conſiſting of all the great men, Council of Gratanlea.

[3] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 554, 555.
[4] Spel. Concil. p. 390. Wilkin Concil. t. 1. p. 205.

Cent. X. both of the clergy and laity, in which both civil laws and eccleſiaſtical canons were made. For beſides the archbiſhop and other biſhops, we are told, that a great number of nobles and wiſe men, who had been called by king Athelſtan, were preſent at this great ſynod; and in the acts of it we find civil and eccleſiaſtical matters ſometimes blended together in the ſame law [s]. The firſt canon of this council reſpects the payment of tithes, and is couched in the following terms: —"I king Athelſtan, by the advice of Wulphelm, my archbiſhop, and of my other biſhops, ſtrictly command and charge you all my reeves, in all parts of my kingdom, in the name of God and his ſaints, and as you value my favour, to pay the tithes, both of the cattle and corn, on all my lands: and I further ordain, that all my biſhops and aldermen ſhall pay the tithes of their lands; and that they ſhall give it in charge to all who are under their juriſdiction to do the ſame. All this I command to be carried into execution by the time appointed, which is the day of the decollation of John the Baptiſt." From this canon it appears, that the famous grant of king Ethelwolf, of the tenth part of his lands to the church, if it did not originally mean the tenth of their produce, was now underſtood in this ſenſe, either by tacit conſent and cuſtom, or by ſome law which is now loſt. It is further

[s] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 401.

evident

evident from this canon, to which a pathetic exhortation is ſubjoined, that all former laws for the payment of tithes had been ineffectual; and we ſhall ſoon ſee cauſe to think, that this one was not much better obeyed.——By the ſecond canon, in one of the copies of this council, it is decreed, that the church-ſcot ſhall ſtill be paid where it is due[6]. From whence we may learn, that the clergy did not relinquiſh any of their former revenues when they obtained the grant of tithes. In the third canon, the king, for the forgiveneſs of his ſins, and ſalvation of his ſoul, commands each of his reeves to maintain one poor Engliſhman from every two of his farms, by giving him one amber of meal, one hog, or one ram, worth four pence, every month, and one mantle, or thirty pence, annually, for his clothing. By two of theſe canons, the various religious ceremonies are preſcribed, which were to be obſerved in performing the ſeveral kinds of ordeal, which ſhall be more particularly deſcribed hereafter[7]. By the ninth canon it is decreed, that fairs and markets ſhall not be kept on the Lord's day. The tenth enumerates both the ſpiritual and ſecular duties of biſhops; which are ſuch as theſe,—That they ſhould teach their clergy how they ought to act in all circumſtances;—to promote peace and concord, and co-operate with ſuch ſecular judges as were friends to juſtice;—to take care that oaths be

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[6] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 402.

[7] See chap. 3.

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rightly adminiſtered, and the ordeals duly performed;—to viſit their flocks, and not ſuffer the devil to deſtroy any of their ſheep;—to keep the ſtandards of the weights and meaſures of their reſpective dioceſes, and take care that all conformed to theſe ſtandards;—to be preſent with the aldermen in their courts, to prevent any ſprouts of pravity from ſpringing up;—not to permit the powerful to oppreſs the weak, or maſters to uſe their ſlaves ill;—and that they ſhould fix the meaſures of work to be performed by ſlaves in all their dioceſes. By the twelfth canon it is decreed, that fifty pſalms ſhall be ſung for the king every Friday in every monaſtery and cathedral church [8]. With theſe eccleſiaſtical laws, ſeveral others of a civil nature are intermixed, which will be more properly conſidered in another place [9].

Death of archbiſhop Wulphelm, and ſucceſſion of Odo.

Though Athelſtan was almoſt conſtantly engaged in war, he held at leaſt four other councils, at the four following places, viz. Exeter, Feverſham, Thunderfield, and London; but the canons of all theſe councils are either loſt, or ſo blended with thoſe of Gratanlea, that they cannot be diſtinguiſhed [10]. Wulphelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury, died A. D. 934, and was ſucceeded in that high ſtation by Odo biſhop of Shereburn; whoſe hiſtory is remarkable enough, without the thundering miracles with which it

[8] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 402.
[9] Chap. 3.
[10] Spel. Concil. p. 407.

is

is adorned by his biographer [11]. He was the eldeſt ſon of a noble and wealthy Dane ſettled in Eaſt-Anglia, by whom, being a bigoted Pagan, he was diſinherited, and turned out of doors, for frequenting the Chriſtian churches when he was a boy. In this extremity, he took ſhelter in the family of Atheim, an Engliſh nobleman of the firſt rank; who was ſo charmed with his ſpirit and ingenuity, that he treated him with parental tenderneſs, and gave him a learned education. Having entered into holy orders, by his own merit, and the intereſt of his patron Athelm, he paſſed rapidly through the inferior ſtations in the church, and was ordained a prieſt before the age preſcribed by the canons, and not long after conſecrated biſhop of Sherebuin. In this office he behaved with the greateſt piety and prudence; and being of a martial ſpirit, he attended his ſovereign king Athelſtan in the field, and contributed not a little to the gaining the great victory of Brunanburgh over the Danes. On the death of Wulphelm, all the world turned their eyes on the learned, pious, and valiant biſhop of Shereburn, as the fitteſt perſon to fill the vacant chair; of which he at length accepted, after having made a few wry faces and very frivolous objections. His chief objection, if we may believe the monkiſh hiſtorians, was, that he was not a monk, as all the former archbiſhops had

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[11] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 78.

Cent. X. been. But, we can hardly ſuppoſe this prelate ſo ignorant of church-hiſtory, as to make this objection, which was probably invented for him long after his death, by thoſe cloyſtered annaliſts, who neglected no opportunity of magnifying their own order. However this may be, though Odo's zeal for religion ſeems ſtill to have been ſincere and fervent, his bold aſpiring ſpirit, no longer under any reſtraint, made him act the primate with a very high hand. This appears, not only from his actions, eſpecially in his old age, but alſo from his famous paſtoral letter to the clergy and people of his province (commonly called *the conſtitutions of Odo*), which was publiſhed A. D. 943; in which he ſpeaks in a very magiſterial tone: "I ſtrictly command "and charge," ſays he, "that no man preſume to lay any tax on the poſſeſſions of the "clergy who are the ſons of God, and the "ſons of God ought to be free from all taxes "in every kingdom.——If any man dares to "diſobey the diſcipline of the church in this "particular, he is more wicked and impudent "than the ſoldiers who crucified Chriſt.——I "command the king, the princes, and all in "authority, to obey, with great humility, the "archbiſhops and biſhops; for they have the "keys of the kingdom of heaven [12]," &c.

Council of London. Beſides theſe conſtitutions, that were publiſhed by the ſole authority of the archbiſhop, there

[12] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 416. Wilkin Concil. t. 1. p. 212.

were

were ſeveral eccleſiaſtical canons made in a great council, both of the clergy and laity, which was held by king Edmund, at London, A. D. 944. By the firſt of theſe canons it is decreed, that all who are in holy orders, from whom the people of God were to expect a virtuous example, ſhould live chaſtely; and that thoſe who violated this canon ſhould forfeit all their goods, and be denied Chriſtian burial. This canon was perhaps aimed againſt the ſecular canons or monks, who were generally married, and deſigned as a prelude to thoſe violent efforts that were ſoon after made to diſpoſſeſs them of their monaſteries on that account. By the ſecond canon of this council, all are commanded to pay their tithes, their church-ſcot, and alms-fee, under the penalty of excommunication. From this we learn, that beſides tithes there were ſeveral other dues claimed by the clergy. By one canon, uncleanneſs with a nun is declared to be an equal crime with adultery, and ſubjected to the ſame penalties. By another, biſhops are commanded to repair and decorate the churches on their own lands at their own expence, and to admoniſh the king to do the ſame to other churches. Though Chriſtianity had been now long eſtabliſhed in England, Paganiſm was far from being quite extirpated, eſpecially amongſt the Danes ſettled in Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland; and therefore there were laws made in almoſt every eccleſiaſtical ſynod againſt the uſe of Pagan rites, which were often practiſed even by

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Cent. X. by thoſe who were a kind of nominal Chriſtians. By the laſt canon of this council, thoſe who were guilty of perjury, or of uſing Pagan rites and ceremonies, are to be excommunicated [13].

Canons of the Northumbrian prieſts.

About the middle of this century, as it is moſt probable, an eccleſiaſtical ſynod of the province of York was held; in which the fines to be paid by the clergy, for various offences, and violations of the canons of the church, are aſcertained. To ſecure the payment of theſe fines, every clergyman, at his admiſſion into orders, was obliged to find twelve bondſmen. As the province of York, or kingdom of Northumberland, was at this time chiefly inhabited by Danes, theſe fines are all to be paid in the Daniſh oras, or ounces of ſilver; and conſidering the great ſcarcity of that precious metal, they are very ſevere, as will appear from a few examples: "If a prieſt celebrate maſs in an unhallowed houſe, let him pay twelve oras. If a prieſt celebrate maſs on an unhallowed altar, let him pay twelve oras. If a prieſt conſecrate the ſacramental wine in a wooden chalice, let him pay twelve oras. If a prieſt celebrate maſs without wine, let him pay twelve oras." Theſe fines, and many others, were to be paid to the biſhop of the dioceſe. This ſeems to have been a ſcheme to bring the diſcipline of the church to a perfect conformity with the laws of the ſtate, which ſet a fixed price

[13] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 420. Wilkin Concil. t. 1. p. 214.

on

on all crimes; and was probably invented by ſome artful prelate, to make the delinquencies of his clergy the means of his wealth [14]. Cent. X.

It is now time to introduce the celebrated St. Dunſtan to the acquaintance of our readers, who was already become very famous, and ſoon after acted a moſt memorable part, both in the affairs of church and ſtate. In doing which, we ſhall give them a ſhort ſpecimen of the monkiſh manner of writing the lives of ſaints. Dunſtan was deſcended from a noble family in Weſſex, and educated in the abbey of Glaſtonbury. Here he ſtudied ſo hard, that it threw him into a violent fever, which brought him to the very point of death. When the whole family were ſtanding about his bed, diſſolved in tears, and expecting every moment to ſee him expire, an angel came from heaven in a dreadful ſtorm, and gave him a medicine, which reſtored him to perfect health in a moment. Dunſtan immediately ſtarted from his bed, and run with all his ſpeed towards the church, to return thanks for his recovery; but the devil met him by the way, ſurrounded by a great multitude of black dogs, and endeavoured to obſtruct his paſſage. This would have frightened ſome boys; but it had no ſuch effect upon Dunſtan; who pronouncing a ſacred name, and brandiſhing his ſtick, put the devil and all his dogs to flight. The church- History of St. Dunſtan.

[14] Wilkin Concil. t. 1. p. 218. Johnſon's Canons, vol. 1. A. D. 950.

doors

Cent. X. doors being ſhut an angel took him in his arms, conveyed him through an opening in the roof, and ſet him ſoftly down on the floor, where he performed his devotions. After his recovery, he purſued his ſtudies with the greateſt ardour, and ſoon became a perfect maſter in philoſophy, divinity, muſic, painting, writing, ſculpture, working in gold, ſilver, braſs, and iron, &c. When he was ſtill very young, he entered into holy orders, and was introduced by his uncle Athelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury, to king Athelſtan; who, charmed with his perſon and accompliſhments, retained him in his court, and employed him in many great affairs. At leiſure hours he uſed to entertain the king and his courtiers with playing on his harp, or ſome other muſical inſtrument; and now and then he wrought a miracle, which gained him great admiration. His old enemy the devil was much offended at this, and prompted ſome envious courtiers to perſuade the king, that his favourite was a magician; which that prince too readily believed. Dunſtan, diſcovering by the king's countenance that he had loſt his favour, and reſolving to reſign, rather than be turned out, retired from court to another uncle, who was biſhop of Wincheſter. This good prelate prevailed upon his nephew to forſake the world, and become a monk; after which he retired to a little cell built againſt the church-wall of Glaſtonbury. Here he ſlept, ſtudied, prayed, meditated, and ſometimes amuſed himſelf with forging

forging ſeveral uſeful things in braſs and iron. Cent. X.
One evening, as he was working very buſily at his forge, the devil, putting on the appearance of a man, thruſt his head in at the window of his cell, and aſked him to make ſomething or other for him. Dunſtan was ſo intent upon his work, that he made no anſwer; on which the devil began to ſwear and talk obſcenely; which betrayed the lurking fiend. The holy blackſmith, putting up a ſecret ejaculation, pulled his tongs, which were red hot, out of the fire, ſeized the devil with them by the noſe, and ſqueezed him with all his ſtrength; which made his infernal majeſty roar and ſcold at ſuch a rate, that he awakened and terrified all the people for many miles around [15]. This, it is preſumed, will be thought a ſufficient ſpecimen of the monkiſh manner of writing hiſtory: it is now proper to purſue the ſtory of Dunſtan in a more rational ſtrain.

This extraordinary perſon was recalled to court by king Edmund A. D. 941; who beſtowed upon him the rich abbey of Glaſtonbury, which, for his ſake, he honoured with many peculiar privileges [16]. He enjoyed a very high degree of the favour of this prince during his ſhort reign of ſix years; but he ſtood much higher in the favour of his brother and ſucceſſor king Edred, to whom he was confeſſor, chief confident, and

Continuation of the hiſtory of St. Dunſtan.

[15] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 97.
[16] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7. Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 100.

prime

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prime miniſter. He employed all his influence during this period of court-favour in promoting the intereſt of the monks of the Benedictine order, to which he belonged, and of which he was a moſt active and zealous patron. Having the treaſures of theſe two princes, eſpecially of the laſt, very much at his command, he laviſhed them away in building and endowing monaſteries for theſe monks, becauſe almoſt all the old monaſteries were in the poſſeſſion of ſecular canons. Not contented with this, he perſuaded Edred (who was a bigoted valetudinary) to beſtow ſuch immenſe treaſures on the churches and monaſteries by his laſt will, that the crown was ſtripped of its moſt valuable poſſeſſions, and left in a ſtate of indigence [17].

Further continuation.

This conduct of Dunſtan, while he was in power, rendered him very odious to Edwi, who ſucceeded his uncle Edred A. D. 955; and his rude behaviour to himſelf, and his beloved queen Elgiva, raiſed the reſentment of that prince ſo high, that he deprived him of all his preferments, and drove him into exile [18]. The baniſhment of Dunſtan, the great patron, or (as Malmſbury calls him) the prince of monks, was a ſevere blow to that order, who were expelled from ſeveral monaſteries; which were made the impure ſtables (according to the ſame author) of the married clergy [19]. But their ſufferings were

[17] Inett's Church Hiſt. vol. 1. p. 316. [18] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7.
[19] Id. ibid.

not

not of long continuance. For Edgar, the younger brother of Edwi, having raiſed a ſucceſsful rebellion againſt his unhappy brother, and uſurped all his dominions on the north ſide of the river Thames, recalled Dunſtan, and gave him the biſhopric of Worceſter, A. D. 957[20]. From this moment he was the chief confident and prime miniſter of king Edgar, who became ſole monarch of England A. D. 959, by the death of his elder brother Edwi. Cent. X.

St. Dunſtan raiſed to the ſee of Canterbury.

Odo archbiſhop of Canterbury having died about two years before king Edwi, Elfin biſhop of Wincheſter, by the influence of that prince, was tranſlated to Canterbury; but died not long after in his way to Rome[21]. On this ſecond vacancy, Edwi procured the election of Brithelm biſhop of Wells; who was hardly warm in his ſeat, when Edgar ſucceeded to his brother's dominions, and obliged the new archbiſhop (who was of a ſoft and gentle diſpoſition) to relinquiſh his high ſtation, and return to his former biſhopric. This violence was practiſed by king Edgar, to make way for his favourite Dunſtan; who was accordingly raiſed to be archbiſhop of Canterbury A. D. 960[22]. Being now poſſeſſed of the primacy, and aſſured of the royal ſupport and aſſiſtance, he prepared to execute the grand deſign which he had long meditated, of compelling the ſecular canons to put away their

20 Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 107. 21 Godwin de Præſul. Ang. p. 73.
22 Id. ibid.

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wives, and become monks; or of driving them out, and introducing Benedictine monks in their room[23]. With this view, he procured the promotion of Oſwald to the ſee of Worceſter, and of Ethelwald to that of Wincheſter; two prelates who were monks themſelves, and animated with the moſt ardent zeal for the advancement of their order.

The married canons ejected.

St. Dunſtan, St. Oſwald, and St. Ethelwald, the three great champions of the monks, and enemies of the married clergy, began the execution of their deſign, by endeavouring to perſuade the ſecular canons in their cathedrals, and other monaſteries, to put away their wives, and take the monaſtic vows and habits[24]. But finding that theſe perſuaſions produced little or no effect, they proceeded to the moſt ſhameful acts of fraud and violence. St. Oſwald (as we are told by a monkiſh hiſtorian) turned all the married canons out of his cathedral church of Worceſter, not by direct force, but by a moſt holy and pious ſtratagem, which he hath not thought fit to mention[25]. He expelled the married clergy out of ſeven other monaſteries within his dioceſe, and filled them with monks, allowing thoſe who were expelled a ſmall penſion for life, barely ſufficient to keep them from ſtarving[26]. Ethelwald acted with ſtill greater violence, if poſſible, towards the canons of his cathedral. For having

[23] Anglia Sacra, t. 1. p. 219.
[24] Id. t. 2. p. 219.
[25] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 8.
[26] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 200.

ſecretly provided a ſufficient number of monkiſh habits, he entered the church one day, followed by a number of ſervants carrying them, and, with a ſtern countenance, told the canons who were performing divine ſervice, that they muſt inſtantly put on theſe habits, and take the vows, or be turned out. The poor canons pleaded hard for a little time to conſider of this cruel alternative; but the unrelenting prelate would not allow them one moment. A few complied, and took the habits; but the far greateſt number choſe rather to become beggars and vagabonds, than forſake their wives and children; for which our monkiſh hiſtorians give them the moſt opprobrious names[27]. To countenance theſe cruel tyrannical proceedings, Dunſtan and his aſſociates repreſented the married clergy as monſters of wickedneſs for cohabiting with their wives, magnified celibacy as the only ſtate becoming the ſanctity of the ſacerdotal office, and propagated a thouſand lies of miracles and viſions to its honour; of which the reader may take the following ſpecimen. A monk, named *Floberht*, who had been appointed abbot of Perſhore, a monaſtery out of which the ſecular canons had been turned by St. Oſwald, was a moſt prodigious zealot for the monaſtic inſtitutions; but in other reſpects of a very indifferent character. This abbot fell ſick, and died; and when all the monks of his own monaſtery, with Germanus

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[27] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 219. W. Malmſ l. 2. c. 8.

Cent. X. abbot of Winchelcomb, and many others, were ſtanding about his corpſe, to their great aſtoniſhment, he raiſed himſelf up, and looked around him. All the monks were ſtruck with terror, and fled, except Germanus; who aſked his brother-abbot, What he had ſeen? and what had brought him back to life? To which the other anſwered, That he had been introduced into heaven by St. Benedict; that God had pardoned all his ſins for the merits of his beloved darling Oſwald biſhop of Worceſter; and had ſent him back to acquaint the world, that Oſwald was one of the greateſt ſaints that ever lived. Being aſked further by Germanus, What kind of figure St. Benedict made in heaven? how he was dreſſed? and how he was attended? he anſwered, That St. Benedict was one of the handſomeſt and beſt dreſſed ſaints in heaven, ſhining with precious ſtones, and attended by innumerable multitudes of monks and nuns, who were all perfect beauties[28]. This, it muſt be confeſſed, was a very ſimple tale; but it was well enough calculated to anſwer the purpoſes for which it was invented, in that age of ignorance and credulity. By theſe and various other arts, Dunſtan archbiſhop of Canterbury, Oſwald biſhop of Worceſter, and Ethelwald biſhop of Wincheſter, in the courſe of a few years, filled no fewer than forty-eight monaſteries with monks of the benedictine order[29].

[28] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 201.

[29] Id. ibid. p. 201.

Though

Though Edgar the Peaceable was a very profligate prince, and ſtuck at nothing to gratify his own paſſions, he was, if poſſible, a greater perſecutor of the married clergy than the three clerical tyrants above mentioned. To them he gave a formal commiſſion, A. D. 969, to expel the married canons out of all the cathedrals and larger monaſteries, promiſing to aſſiſt them in the execution of it with all his power[30]. On this occaſion he made a moſt flaming ſpeech to the three commiſſioners, painting the manners of the married clergy in the moſt odious colours; calling upon them to exert all their power, in conjunction with him, to exterminate thoſe abominable wretches who kept wives. "I know," ſays he, in the concluſion of his ſpeech, "O holy "father Dunſtan! that you have not encouraged "thoſe criminal practices of the clergy. You "have reaſoned, intreated, threatened. From "words it is now time to come to blows. All "the power of the crown is at your command. "Your brethren, the venerable Ethelwald, and "the moſt reverend Oſwald, will aſſiſt you. "To you three I commit the execution of this "important work. Strike boldly;—drive thoſe "irregular livers out of the church of Chriſt, "and introduce others, who will live accord-"ing to rule[31]." This furious champion for chaſtity had, ſome time before the delivery of this harangue, debauched, or rather raviſhed, a

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King Edgar a great perſecutor of the married canons.

[30] Hoveden. Annal. ad ann. 969. [31] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 478.

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Canons of K. Edgar. As king Edgar was very much under the influence of his three favourite prelates, he paid great attention to eccleſiaſtical affairs, and held ſeveral councils for the regulation of them. In one of theſe councils, thoſe ſixty-ſeven canons, commonly called *the canons of king Edgar*, were enacted; in which there are not many things new, or worthy of a place in hiſtory. By the eleventh of theſe canons, every prieſt is commanded to learn and practiſe ſome mechanic trade, and to teach it to all his apprentices for the prieſthood. By the ſixteenth, the clergy are commanded to be at great pains to bring off their people from the worſhip of trees, ſtones, and fountains, and from many other Heatheniſh rites which are therein enumerated. By this it would appear, that many of the people of England were but very imperfect Chriſtians at this time. The fifty-fourth recommends it to the clergy to be very frequent and earneſt in exhorting the people to pay all their dues to the church

[32] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 482.

honeſtly,

honeſtly, and at the proper time;—their plough-alms fifteen nights after Eaſter,—their tithes of young animals at Pentecoſt,—their tithes of corn at All-ſaints,—their Peter-pence at Lammas,—and their church-ſcot at Martinmas. To theſe canons is ſubjoined a penitential, which ſome think was compoſed by St. Dunſtan, and requires penitents to be very particular in confeſſing all the ſins which they have committed by their bodies, their ſkin, their fleſh, their bones, their ſinews, their reins, their griſtles, their tongues, their lips, their palates, their teeth, their hair, their marrow, by every thing ſoft or hard, wet or dry. Confeſſors are then directed what kind of penances to preſcribe in a great variety of caſes. The moſt ſatisfactory penances for laymen are ſaid to be theſe:—To deſiſt from carrying arms—to go upon long pilgrimages—never to ſtay two nights in the ſame place—never to cut their hair, or pare their nails, or go into a warm bath, or a ſoft bed—not to eat fleſh, or drink ſtrong liquors—and if they were rich, to build and endow churches. Long faſtings of ſeveral years are preſcribed as the proper penances for many offences; but theſe faſtings were not ſo formidable as they appear at firſt ſight, eſpecially to the rich, as a year's faſting might be redeemed for thirty ſhillings, equal in quantity of ſilver to four pounds ten ſhillings of our money, and in value to more than thirty pounds. A rich man, who had many friends, and dependents, might diſpatch a ſeven-years faſt in

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three days, by procuring eight hundred and forty men to faſt for him three days on bread and water and vegetables[33]. From this it appears, how much the diſcipline of the church was relaxed ſince the council of Cloveſhoos, A. D. 747; in which this curious method of faſting by proxy was condemned.

Diſputes between the monks and married canons.

The three commiſſioners for expelling the ſecular canons out of the cathedrals and larger monaſteries, executed that commiſſion with great vigour, and no little ſucceſs, during the reign of Edgar; but on the death of that prince, A. D. 975, they received a check. The ſufferings of the perſecuted canons had excited much compaſſion; and many of the nobility who had been overawed by the power and zeal of Edgar, now eſpouſed their cauſe, and promoted their reſtoration. Elfere duke of Mercia drove the monks by force out of all the monaſteries in that extenſive province, and brought back the canons, with their wives and children; while Elfwin duke of Eaſt-Anglia, and Brithnot duke of Eſſex, raiſed their troops to protect the monks in theſe countries[34]. To allay theſe commotions, ſeveral councils were held; in which Dunſtan was ſo hard puſhed by the ſecular canons and their friends, that he was obliged to practiſe ſome of his holy ſtratagems. In a ſynod held in the old monaſtery at Wincheſter, A. D. 977,

33 Spel. Concil. t. 1 p. 443—478.
34 Hoveden Annal. A. D. 976.

when

when this great cauſe was about to be determined againſt the monks, and all the canons lately made in their favour reverſed, the aſſembly was ſuddenly alarmed with a loud voice, which ſeemed to proceed from a crucifix built into the partition-wall, crying,—"Don't do that,—don't "do that.—You judged right formerly; don't "change your judgment." On which the aſſembly broke up in confuſion, and nothing was determined[35]. Though the enemies of the monks had been a little ſtartled at this pretended prodigy, they were not convinced; which occaſioned the meeting of another council at Calne in Wiltſhire, A. D. 978; at which the canons and their friends were hurt, as well as frighted. For the room in which the council met being very much crowded, that part of the floor on which the unhappy canons and their advocates ſtood (the chief of whom was one Beornelm, a Scotch biſhop) ſuddenly fell down; which put an end to the debate for that time, ſome being killed, and many wounded[36]. If theſe events really happened, we cannot avoid entertaining very unfavourable ſuſpicions of the celebrated St. Dunſtan, and pitying the weakneſs of the Engliſh nobility in thoſe benighted times. Cent. X.

In the reign of Ethelred the Unready, who ſucceeded his brother Edward the Martyr A. D. 979, the Engliſh were engaged in ſo many wars Deaths of Dunſtan, Ethelwold, and Oſwald.

[35] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 490.
[36] Id. p. 494. Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 112.

Cent. X. with the Danes, and involved in ſo many calamities, that they had little leiſure to attend to eccleſiaſtical affairs; which renders the church-hiſtory in the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century as barren as that of the ſtate is melancholy. The three famous prelates, Dunſtan, Ethelwald, and Oſwald, ſo far outſhone their brethren in their zeal for the monaſtic inſtitutions, that they quite eclipſed all the other biſhops their cotemporaries, who are hardly ever mentioned by the monkiſh writers. Ethelwald biſhop of Wincheſter, a great builder of monaſteries, and moſt zealous patron of the monks, was the firſt of this famous triumvirate who quitted the ſtage, dying A. D. 984[37]. By his death, the hopes of the ſecular canons, of whom he had been a moſt cruel perſecutor, were a little revived, and they made great efforts to get one of their own number elected in his room; but were at length baffled by the ſuperior art and influence of the archbiſhop, who procured the advancement of Elphigus abbot of Bath to the ſee of Wincheſter; by pretending that the apoſtle St. Andrew had appeared to him, and aſſured him, that Elphigus was the fitteſt perſon in the world for that charge[38]. St. Dunſtan did not long ſurvive his friend and fellow-labourer Ethelwald, but died A. D. 988, in the ſixty-fourth year of his age, having held the biſhop-

[37] Godwin de Præſul. Angl. p. 266.
[38] Anglia Sacra, t. 2, p. 221.

ric

ric of London, together with the archbiſhopric of Canterbury, about twenty-ſeven years[39]. As this prelate was the great reſtorer and promoter of the monaſtic inſtitutions, the grateful monks, who were almoſt the only hiſtorians of thoſe dark ages, have loaded him with the moſt extravagant praiſes, and repreſented him as the greateſt wonder-worker, and higheſt favourite of heaven, that ever lived. To ſay nothing of his many conflicts with the devil, in which he often belaboured that enemy of mankind moſt ſeverely, the following ſhort ſtory, which is told with great exultation by his biographer Oſbern, will give the Engliſh reader ſome idea of the aſtoniſhing impiety and impudence of thoſe monks, and of the no leſs aſtoniſhing blindneſs and credulity of thoſe unhappy times. "The moſt admirable, "the moſt ineſtimable father Dunſtan (ſays that "author), whoſe perfections exceeded all human "imagination, was admitted to behold the "mother of God and his own mother in eternal "glory: for before his death he was carried up "into heaven, to be preſent at the nuptials of "his own mother with the eternal King, which "were celebrated by the angels with the moſt "ſweet and joyous ſongs. When the angels "reproached him for his ſilence on this great "occaſion, ſo honourable to his mother, he "excuſed himſelf on account of his being un-"acquainted with thoſe ſweet and heavenly Cent. X.

[39] Godwin de Præſul. Angl. P. 75.

"ſtrains;

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"ſtrains; but being a little inſtructed by the "angels, he broke out into this melodious ſong, "O King and Ruler of nations, &c." It is unneceſſary to make any comment on this moſt ſhocking ſtory. St. Dunſtan was ſucceeded in the ſee of Canterbury by Ethelgar biſhop of Seolſey, who lived only one year and three months; and then by Siricius biſhop of Wilton[40], who governed that church about four years[41]. Both theſe prelates had been monks of Glaſtonbury, and diſciples of St. Dunſtan; but the ſhortneſs of their pontificates, and the confuſion of the times, did not permit them to perform any thing memorable. St. Oſwald, the great friend and aſſociate of St. Dunſtan in the expulſion of the ſecular canons, and introduction of the monks, died A. D. 993, after he had held the archbiſhopric of York, together with the biſhopric of Worceſter, about twenty-two years[42]. By theſe two famous ſaints, holding each of them two biſhoprics together for ſo many years, we have ſome reaſon to ſuſpect they were not quite ſo heavenly-minded as their admirers repreſent them.

Fatal effects of the increaſe of monaſteries.

The violent and too ſucceſsful zeal of Dunſtan and his aſſociates, in promoting the building and endowing ſo great a number of houſes for the entertainment of uſeleſs monks and nuns, was very fatal to their country: for by this

[40] Anglia Sacra, p. 2. p. 114.
[41] Godwin de Præſul Angl. p. 75. [42] Id. t. 2. p. 18.

means,

means, a ſpirit of irrational, unmanly ſuperſtition was diffuſed amongſt the people, which debaſed their minds, and diverted them from nobler purſuits: and a very great proportion of the lands of England was put into hands who contributed nothing to its defence; which made it an eaſy prey, firſt to the inſulting Danes, and afterwards to the victorious Normans. Cent. X.

The people of Wales, who were governed by their own princes, were ſtill inſtructed by their own clergy, and ſeem to have had but little connection with the churches of Rome or England in the tenth century. It appears, however, from the laws of Hoel Dha, who flouriſhed about the middle of this century, that the Welſh were not much wiſer, or much leſs ſuperſtitious, than their neighbours in this period; for by theſe laws, which are ſaid to have been made in a great council of the nobility and clergy, at which no fewer than one hundred and forty prelates, i. e. biſhops, abbots, and rectors, were preſent, it is evident that the churches and clergy of Wales enjoyed the ſame diſtinctions and immunities with thoſe of England [43]. The truth is, that there was a very great conformity between the laws of England and Wales at this time, both in civil and eccleſiaſtical matters; which muſt have been occaſioned by the vicinity of theſe countries, the unavoidable intercourſe of their inhabitants, and the aſcendant which the Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of Wales.

[43] Leges Hoeli Dha, a Wottono editæ, paſſim.

kings

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kings of England had acquired over the princes of Wales, who were their vaſſals and tributaries [44].

Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of Scotland.

The hiſtory of the church of Scotland is as little known in this period as that of Wales. Though the biſhops of St. Andrew's were not yet raiſed to the rank of archbiſhops and metropolitans, they ſeem to have had ſome kind of pre-eminence over the other biſhops of Scotland, occaſioned probably by their greater wealth, and their greater influence with the princes of thoſe times. Kellach the Second, who was biſhop of St. Andrew's from A. D. 904 to A. D. 939, is ſaid to have been the firſt biſhop who went from Scotland to Rome for conſecration, or for obtaining the approbation of the pope [45]. We have good reaſon to preſume, that there were ſeveral councils held in Scotland in the courſe of this century for the regulation of eccleſiaſtical affairs; but the records of all theſe councils have long ago periſhed through the injuries of time, the cruel policy of Edward I. of England, and the ſudden deſtruction of the abbeys of Scotland, with their archives and libraries, at the Reformation. There is a ſlight notice of one of theſe councils preſerved in a very ſhort chronicle, which hath eſcaped all theſe diſaſters. "In the "following year, A. D. 906, king Conſtantine, "the ſon of Ethy, with Kellach his biſhop, and "the Scots, decreed, that the rules of faith and

[44] Leges Hoeli Dha, a Wottono editæ, paſſim.
[45] Spottiſwood's Church Hiſtory, p. 26.

"of

" of the goſpels, with the laws and diſcipline of " the church, ſhould be obſerved, in an aſſembly " held on the Hill of Faith, near the royal city " of Scone. From that day, that hill hath " borne the name of *Knockcreidigh*, or, *the Hill " of Faith*[46]." The diſpute about the celibacy of the regular canons of Kuldees, is ſaid to have been agitated in Scotland as well as in England in this century; and there is a circumſtance mentioned by ſeveral monkiſh hiſtorians which renders this very probable. When this great cauſe was to be debated before a council at Calne in Wiltſhire, A. D. 978, the regular canons placed at their head as their chief orator one Beornelm, a Scotch biſhop; a man, ſay theſe authors, of invincible loquacity, who greatly puzzled poor old St. Dunſtan[47]. It is not improbable, that this loquacious gentleman had gained a victory on this ſubject in his own country, which made the Engliſh canons engage him to plead their cauſe. Cent. X.

Elfric, formerly biſhop of Wilton, was archbiſhop of Canterbury from A. D. 995 to A. D. 1005; and was one of the moſt learned men and moſt voluminous writers of the age in which he lived. This prelate, conſcious of the incapacity of many of the clergy to inſtruct the people in the principles and precepts of religion, tranſlated no fewer than eighty ſermons or homilies from the Cent. XI. Ælfric's homilies.

[46] Innes's Eſſays, v. 2. p. 786. [47] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 112.

Cent. XI. Latin into the Saxon language for their uſe[48]. Theſe ſermons were ſuited to different ſeaſons and occaſions, and were deſigned to be read by the inferior clergy to the people at theſe ſeaſons for their inſtruction. The ſermon for Eaſter Sunday, on the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, hath been often printed; and ſhews very plainly, that the church of England had not yet embraced the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation[49]. This is ſufficiently evident from the following paſſage in that diſcourſe: "The body that Chriſt ſuffered "in was born of the fleſh of Mary, with blood "and with bone, with ſkin and with ſinews, in "human limbs, with a reaſonable living ſoul: "but his ſpiritual body, which we call the *houſel*, "is gathered of many corns, without blood and "bone, without limb, without ſoul; and there- "fore nothing is to be underſtood therein bodily, "but ſpiritually. Whatever is in the houſel "which giveth life, that is ſpiritual virtue, and "inviſible energy. Chriſt's body that ſuffered "death, and roſe from death, ſhall never die "again, but is eternal and unpaſſible; but "houſel is temporal not eternal, corruptible, "and dealed into ſundry parts, chewed between "the teeth, and ſent into the belly. This "myſtery is a pledge and a figure; Chriſt's "body is truth itſelf. This pledge we do keep "myſtically until we come to the truth itſelf;

[48] Ælfrici præfatio ſecunda ad grammaticam ſuam, p. 2.
[49] Hickes diſſertatio epiſtolaris, p. 98.

"and

" and then is this pledge ended [50]." It is hardly possible to express the present sentiments of the church of England, and of other Protestant churches, on this subject, in plainer words than these; and it would certainly be no easy task for the most artful sophister to accommodate them to the doctrine of transubstantiation. Cent. XI.

This excellent prelate, for so he certainly was for the age in which he lived, composed also a kind of episcopal charge, which seems to have been designed as a form for bishops in instructing their clergy. The several injunctions in this charge are delivered in an authoritative tone, and in the form of commands; for which reason they have been commonly called, *Ælfric's canons*, though there is no appearance of their having been enacted by any ecclesiastical synod. These injunctions or canons are thirty-seven in number, and contain many curious particulars concerning the discipline and ceremonies of the church of England in those times. As Ælfric had been educated under Ethelwald bishop of Winchester, he was, like his master, a great promoter of the celibacy of the clergy; and therefore, in the first eight of these canons, he argues strenuously, though not very logically, against the marriage of priests. It appears, however, from those very canons, that the clergy of England were generally married at this time, and that they stoutly defended the lawfulness of their marriages. " These Ælfric's canons.

[50] Bed. Hist. Eccl. notis Wheeloci, p. 402.

" canons

Cent. XI. "canons againſt the marriage of prieſts (ſays "Ælfric) ſeem ſtrange to you to hear; for ye "have ſo brought your wretched doings into "faſhion, as if there was no danger in prieſts "living like married men. The prieſts now "reply, That St. Peter was a married man, and "that they cannot live without the company of "a woman." By the ninth of theſe canons, the clergy are forbidden to be preſent at a marriage, or to give their benediction, when either of the parties had been married before, though ſuch marriages are not declared to be abſolutely unlawful, but only to be diſcouraged. The next ſeven canons deſcribe the names and offices of the ſeven orders of the clergy, which are theſe: —1. the oſtiary, who is to open and ſhut the church-doors, and ring the bells;—2. the lector, who is to read God's word in the church;—3. the exorciſt, whoſe office is to drive out evil ſpirits by invocations and adjurations;—4. the acolyth, who holds the tapers at the reading of the goſpels, and celebrating maſs;—5. the ſubdeacon, who is to bring forth the holy veſſels, and attend the deacon at the altar;—6. the deacon, who miniſters to the maſs-prieſt, places the oblation on the altar, reads the goſpel, baptizeth children, and gives the houſel to the people;—7. the maſs prieſt or preſbyter, who preaches, baptizes, and conſecrates the houſel. This canon declares, that the biſhop is of the ſame order with the preſbyter, but more honourable. By the eighteenth, the diſtinction between the

the ſecular clergy and the monks or regulars is eſtabliſhed. The next canon commands the clergy to ſing the ſeven tide-ſongs at their appointed hours, viz. the ught-ſong, or matins, early in the morning,—the prime-ſong at ſeven o'clock,—the undern-ſong at nine o'clock,—the mid-day ſong at twelve o'clock,—the none-ſong at three o'clock after noon,—and the night ſong at nine o'clock at night. By the twenty-firſt canon, prieſts are commanded to provide themſelves with all the neceſſary books for performance of divine ſervice, viz. the pſalter, the epiſtle-book, the goſpel-book, the maſs-book, the ſong-book, the hand-book, the kalendar, the paſſional, the penitential, and the reading-book. By the twenty-third, prieſts are commanded to explain the goſpel for the day, every Sunday, in Engliſh, to the people, and to teach them the creed and *Pater noſter* in Engliſh as often as they can. By the twenty-ſeventh, prieſts are forbidden to take money for baptizing children, or performing any other part of their duty. The thirty-ſecond commands prieſts always to have a ſufficient quantity of oil by them which had been conſecrated by the biſhop, for baptizing children and anointing the ſick; but that no ſick perſon ſhould be anointed unleſs he deſired it. The thirty-ſeventh and laſt of theſe canons is in the form of an epiſtle, which was given to each prieſt on Maunday Thurſday, when he came or ſent to the biſhop for his annual ſtock of conſecrated chriſm and oil; and con- Cent. XI.

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tains ſeveral directions about the celebration of maſs, and other offices. Among many other ceremonies to be performed on Good-Friday, the people are directed to adore and kiſs the croſs. As the freaks of ſuperſtition are endleſs, ſome prieſts about this time had conceived a notion, that the ſacramental bread conſecrated on Eaſter-day was more efficacious than that which was hallowed at any other time; and therefore they uſed to conſecrate a great quantity on that day, and keep it through the whole year for the uſe of the ſick. This practice is condemned, becauſe when the conſecrated bread was kept ſo long, it was apt to become ſtale, to be loſt, or eaten by mice. Prieſts are directed to mix water with the ſacramental wine; "becauſe the wine "betokeneth our redemption through Chriſt's "blood, and the water betokeneth the people "for whom he ſuffered." A great number of faſt-days are commanded to be obſerved, particularly every Friday, except from Eaſter to Pentecoſt, and from Midwinter to Twelfth-night. Sunday was to be kept from Saturday at noon to Monday morning [51]. Theſe are the moſt remarkable particulars in this famous charge; on which we ſhall leave our readers to make their own reflections.

Death of Ælfric.

Archbiſhop Ælfric expelled the regular canons who would not abandon their wives from his cathedral church of Canterbury, and brought

[51] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 572—582. Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 957 in

in Benedictine monks in their room. He had also the influence to procure a charter from king Ethelred, confirming that tranſaction, and all the privileges and poſſeſſions of his favourite monks; praying moſt devoutly, that all perſons who ſhould give them any diſturbance, might be torn by the teeth of all the dogs in hell[52]. This ſeems to have been the laſt tranſaction of this prelate's life; who died A. D. 1005, and was ſucceeded by Elphegus biſhop of Wincheſter. Cent. XI.

The Engliſh at this time were involved in very great calamities, and threatened with total ruin, by a grievous famine, and the ſword of the victorious Danes, from whom they ſometimes purchaſed a ſhort precarious truce with great ſums of money. In one of theſe intervals, A. D. 1009, a great council of all the chief men of the clergy and laity was held at Enſham in Oxfordſhire, to deliberate on the moſt effectual means of preſerving themſelves and their country from that deſtruction with which they were threatened. Elphegus archbiſhop of Canterbury, and Wulſtan archbiſhop of York, ſeem to have convinced this wiſe aſſembly, that to oblige the clergy to put away their wives, and the laity to pay all their dues honeſtly and punctually to the church, would be the beſt means of averting the diſpleaſure, and conciliating the favour of heaven; and therefore many ſtrict laws were made for theſe purpoſes[53]. But either Council of Enſham.

[52] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 504.

[53] Id. t. 1. p. 513, &c.

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theſe laws were not well obſerved, or had not the deſired effect; for the miſeries of the Engliſh ſtill continued to increaſe; and about four years after this, the Danes having taken Canterbury, reduced it to aſhes, butchered nine tenths of the inhabitants, and murdered the archbiſhop, becauſe he would not, or could not, pay the prodigious ranſom which they demanded [54].

Council of Habham.

Livingus biſhop of Wells ſucceeded Elphegus A. D. 1013, and was deeply involved in the calamities of thoſe unhappy times [55]. Soon after the return of king Ethelred from Normandy (whither he had fled with his family to eſcape the fury of the victorious Danes), a great council was held A. D. 1014, at a place called *Habham*; in which it was reſolved to practiſe ſome extraordinary devotions, to prevail upon the ſaints and angels to fight againſt the Danes. St. Michael the Archangel had lately gained great reputation by a victory which the Chriſtians in Apulia had obtained by his means, as they imagined, over the Pagans; and the Engliſh determined to perſuade this celeſtial warrior, if poſſible, to do them the like favour. With this view, it was decreed at this council, that every perſon who was of age ſhould faſt three days on bread, water, and raw herbs, before the feaſt of St. Michael, ſhould confeſs and go to church barefoot; and that every prieſt, with his whole congregation, ſhould go theſe three days

[54] Anglia Sacra, t. 2. p. 141. [55] Godwin de Præſul. Ang. p. 77.

in

in ſolemn proceſſion barefoot. The monks and nuns in all their convents were commanded to celebrate the maſs *contra Paganos* (againſt the Pagans) every canonical hour, lying proſtrate on the ground, and in that poſture to ſing the pſalm,—"Lord, how are they increaſed that "trouble me!" &c.[56] The Engliſh at that time ſeem to have repoſed their chief hopes of preſervation in theſe and ſuch obſervations; ſo entirely were their minds blinded and infatuated by ſuperſtition. Their affairs, however, became daily more and more deſperate; and about three years after this council, they were entirely ſubdued by the Danes. Cent. XI.

Though the generality of the Danes at this time were either Pagans, or only a kind of half Chriſtians, their king Canute, who became alſo king of England A. D. 1017, was a zealous Chriſtian, according to the mode of the age in which he lived. Of this he gave ſufficient evidence,—by repairing the monaſteries which had been deſtroyed by the Danes in the late wars,—by granting many immunities to the convents and clergy,—by building and endowing churches[57],—by viſiting Rome in perſon A. D. 1031, and chiefly—by the many eccleſiaſtical laws that were made in his reign[58]. The firſt ſyſtem of Canute's eccleſiaſtical laws contains twenty-ſix canons; of which the firſt four enlarge and ſecure Eccleſiaſtical laws of king Canute.

[56] Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 1014. Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 530.
[57] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11. [58] Id. ibid. p. 533—570.

Cent. XI. the protection of the church, or its rights of ſanctuary. In the third of theſe canons, churches are ranged into four claſſes, and the mulct for violating their protection proportioned to their dignity, viz. for violating the protection of a cathedral, five pounds; of a middling church, one hundred and twenty ſhillings; of a leſſer church that hath a burying-place, ſixty ſhillings; of a country church without a burying-place, thirty ſhillings. In the fifth canon, rules are laid down for the trial of prieſts accuſed of various crimes, which are very favourable to the clergy. By the ſixth, celibacy is recommended to all the clergy, and particularly enjoined to thoſe in prieſts orders; and for their encouragement it is declared, that an unmarried prieſt ſhall be eſteemed equal in dignity to a thane. The ſeventh prohibits marriage within the ſixth degree of kindred. In the ſix ſubſequent canons, all the dues payable to the clergy, as tithes of corn and cattle, Rome-ſcot, church-ſcot, plough-alms, light-ſcot, and ſoul-ſcot, are enumerated, and the payment of them ſecured by various penalties. The remaining canons contain nothing new or curious[59]. There are ſeveral laws reſpecting religion and the church intermixed with the civil laws of this prince; of which the following one is the moſt remarkable: "We ſtrictly prohibit all Heatheniſm; i. e. the "worſhip of idols or Heathen gods, the ſun,

59 Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 1017. Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 538.

"moon,

"moon, fire, rivers, fountains, rocks, or trees "of any kind; the practice of witchcraft, or "committing murder by magic, or firebrands, "or any other infernal tricks." Cent. XI.

History of the church in the reigns of Harold, Hardicanute, and Edward the Confessor.

The two succeeding reigns of Harold Harefoot and Hardicanute, from A. D. 1035 to A. D. 1041, were so short and unsettled, that they afford no materials of importance for the history of the church. Though Edward the Confessor was a prince of great piety, according to the mode of the times in which he lived, his court was so much disturbed during the greatest part of his reign, by the cabals of the English and Norman factions, that he did not pay so much attention to ecclesiastical affairs as might have been expected. There are indeed two systems of laws extant, which are commonly called *the laws of Edward the Confessor*, in which there are several canons in favour of the church and clergy; but they contain in their own bosom the most unquestionable evidence of their having been composed, or at least very much changed, after the conquest [60]. This prince, however, was a great benefactor to the church, and employed the last years of his life in building the famous monastery of St. Peter's, Westminster, on which he bestowed great riches, and many singular privileges and immunities [61].

Character of the eleventh century.

Ignorance and superstition arrived at a great height in the church of England in the former

[60] Johnson's Canons, A. D. 1064, 1065. Spel Concil. t. 1. p. 619.
[61] Dugdal, Monasticon, vol. 1. p. 55.

Cent. XI. part of the eleventh century. Of this the frequency of pilgrimages to Rome,—the prodigious ſums expended in the purchaſe of relics,—the immenſe wealth and pernicious immunities of the clergy, to mention no others, are ſufficient evidences. In this period, the roads between England and Rome were ſo crowded with pilgrims, that the very tolls which they paid were objects of importance to the princes through whoſe territories they paſſed; and very few Engliſhmen imagined they could get to heaven without paying this compliment to St. Peter, who kept the keys of the celeſtial regions[62]. The pope and Roman clergy carried on a very lucrative traffic in relics, of which they never wanted inexhauſtible ſtores. Kings, princes, and wealthy prelates, purchaſed pieces of the croſs, or whole legs and arms of apoſtles; while others were obliged to be contented with the toes and fingers of inferior ſaints. Agelnoth archbiſhop of Canterbury, when he was at Rome, A. D. 1021, purchaſed from the pope an arm of St. Auguſtin biſhop of Hippo, for one hundred talents, or ſix thouſand pound weight of ſilver, and one talent, or ſixty pound weight of gold[63]. A prodigious ſum! which may enable us to form ſome idea of the unconſcionable knavery of the ſellers, and the aſtoniſhing folly and ſuperſtition of the purchaſers of thoſe commodities. The building, endowing, and adorning of monaſ-

[62] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11. [63] Id. ibid.

teries,

teries, had been carried on with ſuch mad pro- Cent. XI.
fuſion for about one hundred and fifty years, that a great part of the wealth of England had been expended on theſe ſtructures, or lay buried in their ornaments and utenſils. "The maſſes "of gold and ſilver (ſays William of Malmſ- "bury), which queen Emma, with a holy pro- "digality, beſtowed upon the monaſteries of "Wincheſter, aſtoniſhed the minds of ſtrangers, "while the ſplendour of the precious ſtones "dazzled their eyes[64]." In this period the numbers, both of the ſecular and regular clergy, increaſed very much, and their poſſeſſions ſtill more. By the frequent and extravagant grants of land beſtowed on cathedrals, monaſteries, and other churches, from the beginning of the tenth to the middle of the eleventh century, we have good reaſon to believe, that at the death of Edward the Confeſſor more than one third of all the lands of England were in the poſſeſſion of the clergy, exempted from all taxes, and for the moſt part even from military ſervices[65]. When we reflect on theſe circumſtances, we cannot be very much ſurpriſed, that the people of England, in this period, were ſo cruelly inſulted by the Danes, and at the end of it ſo eaſily conquered by the Normans.

64 W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 11. 65 Spelman Gloſſ. p. 396.

THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

BOOK II.

CHAP. III.

The hiſtory of the conſtitution, government, and laws of Great Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, *to the landing of William duke of Normandy,* A. D. 1066.

Curioſity and importance of the ſubject of this chapter.

THE hiſtory of that political conſtitution and form of government, which was eſtabliſhed in the beſt and greateſt part of this iſland, and of the laws which were enacted by the Anglo-Saxons in this period, is equally curious, important, and intereſting. It is curious, as it ſets before us a great variety of uncommon and amuſing objects, and diſcovers the origin of many of our moſt ancient cuſtoms and inſtitutions. It is important and intereſting to the Engliſh nation, as that form of government, and thoſe

thoſe laws, were the work of their remote anceſtors; the moſt valuable legacy which they left to their poſterity, and the foundation of that moſt noble and beautiful ſuperſtructure, their preſent free and happy conſtitution.

Difficulty of writing the hiſtory of law and government.

It is much to be lamented, that it is ſo difficult, or rather that it is impoſſible, to write the hiſtory of the origin and progreſs of the Engliſh conſtitution, laws, and government, in ſo clear and full a manner, as to leave nothing dark or wanting; and ſupported in every part with ſuch ſtrength of evidence, as to leave nothing doubtful. That this is really impoſſible, will be moſt readily acknowledged by thoſe who are beſt acquainted with the ſubject. The writers who flouriſhed in this period were very few, and theſe few were cloiſtered monks; who never entertained a thought of giving a particular account of the laws and government of their country. Many of the Anglo-Saxon laws themſelves have been entirely loſt, and others have ſuffered ſo much by the injuries of time, and the inattention of tranſcribers, that their meaning can hardly be diſcovered. Some particulars relating to this ſubject are ſunk ſo deep in the darkneſs of antiquity, and others are ſo involved in clouds of learned duſt that have been raiſed by angry diſputants, that it ſeems to require more than human ſagacity to find out the truth, and guard againſt miſtakes. In theſe circumſtances, all that can be done is,—to cheriſh a cordial love of truth,—to ſearch after it with care and

diligence,—and to lay the result of these researches before the publick with plainness and sincerity.

Plan of this chapter.

To prevent that confusion which is commonly occasioned by blending various subjects together, and to preserve an uniformity between the plan of this chapter and of that on government in the preceding period, it is proper to divide it into three distinct sections. In the first section shall be given,—A brief account,—of the several German nations which settled in Britain in this period;—of the places of their original seats on the continent;—of the situation and limits of their settlements in this island;—of the political divisions of their territories that were made by them,—and by the other British nations. The second section shall contain a delineation,—of the different ranks of people,—of magistrates,—and of courts of law and justice, in Britain, in this period. The third and last section shall comprehend the history of the several kinds of laws that were enacted, and in force, in this period.

SECTION I.

A brief account,—of the ſeveral German nations which ſettled in Britain, in this period;—of the places of their original ſeats on the continent;—of the ſituation and limits of their ſettlements in this iſland;—of the political diviſions of their territories that were made by them,—and by the other Britiſh nations.

ANCIENT Germany comprehended all that extenſive tract of country which is bounded by the Rhine on the ſouth,—by the German ocean on the weſt,—by the northern ſea on the north,—and by the Viſtula, &c. on the eaſt[1]. This country (which, beſides modern Germany, comprehended all the dominions of Denmark and Sweden, and ſeveral other diſtricts) was anciently inhabited by a prodigious number of diſtinct tribes and nations. But though theſe Germanic nations differed very much from one another,—in their ſituation,—their ſtrength,—their wealth,—and ſome other circumſtances; yet they appear to have ſprung from the ſame origin,—to have ſpoken the ſame language, though in different dialects,—and to have borne a very great reſemblance to each other in their manners, cuſtoms, and forms of government[2].

[1] Cluver. German. Antiq. l. 1. c. 2. p. 76.

[2] Tacit. de Morib. German. paſſim. Northern Antiquities, Preface, p. 24.

This

This was particularly true of thoſe nations which came from Germany, and ſettled in Britain, in this period, and from whom the great body of the Engliſh nation is deſcended. Their original ſeats on the continent were contiguous, ſituated in that peninſula which is commonly called *the Cimbric Cherſoneſe*, bounded by the river Elbe on the ſouth, by the German ocean on the weſt, and by the Baltic ſea on the north and eaſt. When the unhappy Britons formed the fatal reſolution of calling in foreign auxiliaries, to preſerve them from that deſtruction with which they were threatened by the Scots and Picts, they could find none nearer than the inhabitants of that country, who were likely to grant them the protection which they wanted: for their neareſt neighbours, and natural allies, the Gauls, who ſpoke the ſame language, and profeſſed the ſame religion with themſelves, were in no condition to give them any aſſiſtance, having been invaded, and almoſt conquered, by the Franks, another German nation [3].

Original ſeats of the German nations which came into Britain.

The country above deſcribed, to which the Britons directed their eyes for relief in their diſtreſs, was at that time inhabited by three nations, which were called *Saxons*, *Angles*, and *Iutes*; who ſent armies into Britain, and there obtained ſettlements [4]. From theſe three nations the Engliſh in general derive their origin;

Nations from whom the Engliſh are deſcended.

3 Gregor. Turonenſ. l. 1, 2.

4 Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1, c. 15. Chronicon Ethelwerdi, l. 1.

though

though ſeveral other nations, particularly Danes and Normans, have ſince mingled with them in very great numbers [5].

The Saxons.

The Saxons had long been the moſt powerful of theſe three nations, and had held the other two in ſome degree of ſubjection. This is the reaſon that thoſe famous rovers who infeſted the narrow ſeas, plundered the coaſts of Gaul and Britain, and gave the Romans ſo much trouble, in the fourth and fifth centuries, were all called Saxons, though they conſiſted of ſeveral nations. The chief ſeat of the people properly called Saxons, was in Holſatia, or Old Saxony, now Holſtein; though, after the departure of the Franks into Gaul, they extended themſelves along the ſea-coaſts to the banks of the Rhine [6]. The Britons having often experienced the valour of theſe Saxons to their coſt, were deſirous of employing it in their defence; and knowing them to be a maritime people, who delighted in ſuch expeditions, they very naturally applied to them for aſſiſtance. They were but too ſucceſsful in their application; ſeveral bands of Saxon adventurers came over and fixed themſelves in Britain, where their poſterity ſtill flouriſh, though under another name, and bear, if we may believe ſeveral travellers, a very remarkable reſemblance in their perſons to the

[5] Sheringham de Origine Gentis Anglorum, c. 2. p. 25, &c.
[6] Id. ibid.

preſent

preſent inhabitants of Holſtein, from whence their anceſtors came [7].

The Angles are ſaid to have been a tribe of the Suevi, who in Cæſar's time were the greateſt and braveſt of all the German nations [8]. This tribe, after various adventures and migrations, ſettled in that part of the Cimbric Cherſoneſus, which now forms the duchy of Sleſwic, where ſome veſtiges of their name ſtill remain in the diſtrict of Anglen, between Sleſwic and Flenſburgh [9]. It was in this ſituation the Britiſh ambaſſadors found them; and from this country they embarked in the Britiſh expeditions, with greater ſpirit, and in greater numbers, than any of the other German nations; which procured them the honour of giving their name to England and its inhabitants, who make at preſent one of the richeſt, moſt powerful, and flouriſhing nations in the world [10]. The Angles.

The Iutes, who were a tribe of the Getæ, the conquerors of ſo many countries, inhabited the extremity of the Cimbric Cherſoneſus, which from them is ſtill called *Jutland*, and is bounded by the German ocean on the weſt, the Baltic on the eaſt, and the country of the Angles on the ſouth [11]. Beſides theſe three nations, there were many adventurers belonging to the neighbouring tribes, particularly to the Frizians, who embarked The Iutes.

7 Howel's Letters, vol. 1. § 6. let. 4. 8 Cæſar Bel. Gal. l. 4.
9 Cluver. German. Antiq. l. 3. c. 27. p. 605.
10 Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15. 11 Sheringham, c. 2. p. 32.

with them in their Britannic expeditions, and ſettled in this iſland.

Their ſeats in Britain.

The hiſtory of the ſeveral embarkations of theſe three nations from their native ſeats for this iſland, and of the ſeven kingdoms which they eſtabliſhed in it, hath been already given [12]. It only remains, in this place, to give a very brief deſcription of the moſt common boundaries of theſe ſeveral kingdoms, with an account of the particular nation by which each of them was erected, that all the people of England may have a diſtinct view of their remote anceſtors. In doing this, we ſhall begin at the ſouth-weſt corner of Britain, and proceed regularly towards the north-eaſt.

Kingdom of Weſſex.

The ſouth-weſt parts of Britain were ſubdued by ſeveral ſucceſſive bands of Saxons, who there erected a kingdom about the beginning of the ſixth century; which, from their name, and that of its ſituation, was called the kingdom of *Weſſex*, or of the *Weſt-Saxons*. This kingdom was very ſmall for a conſiderable time after it was founded; but being happy in a long ſucceſſion of great princes of the ſame royal family, it gradually increaſed, and at length ſwallowed up all the other kingdoms. In the times of the heptarchy, it comprehended thoſe countries which now conſtitute the counties of Hants, Berks, Wilts, Somerſet, Dorſet, Devon, and part of Cornwall [13]. The iſle of Wight, which

[12] See chap. 1.

[13] Speed Chron. p. 292.

lies

lies off the coaſt of Hampſhire, was commonly under the government of the kings of Weſſex, though it was peopled by a colony of Iutes, who alſo poſſeſſed ſome diſtricts on the continent oppoſite to that iſland [14]. The capital of this kingdom was Wincheſter, the Venta Belgarum of the Romans, and the Cair Guent of the Britons.

2. Next to the kingdom of Weſſex lay the little kingdom of Suſſex, or of the South-Saxons, comprehending only the two counties of Surrey and Suſſex. It was, as its name implies, founded and inhabited by Saxons. This kingdom, though one of the moſt ancient, was one of the ſmalleſt, weakeſt, and of the ſhorteſt duration of any of the heptarchy. When it was converted to Chriſtianity, A. D. 678, it contained no more than about ſeven thouſand families [15]. This was partly owing to its ſmall extent; but chiefly to a great part of it being covered with the wood Andereda [16]. The capital of this little kingdom was Chicheſter, the Regnum of the Romans, and the Cair Cei of the Britons. Kingdom of Suſſex.

3. Next to Suſſex, eaſtward, lay the kingdom of Kent, which comprehended only the county of that name. This was the moſt ancient of all the Saxon kingdoms in Britain, having been founded about A. D. 455, and was alſo the firſt that embraced the Chriſtian religion. This kingdom, if we may depend on the authority of Kingdom of Kent.

[14] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.
[15] Id. l. 4. c. 13.
[16] Camd. Britan. v. 1. p. 195.

Bede and Ethelwerd, was erected and inhabited by a colony of Iutes, who ſeem not to have come directly from Jutland into Britain, but to have been ſettled for ſome time near the mouth of the Rhine, where it is probable the Britiſh ambaſſadors found them [17]; for it is quite improbable, that thoſe ambaſſadors would make their firſt application at the greateſt diſtance; and there is ſome poſitive evidence, that Hengiſt, the founder of this kingdom, built the caſtle of Leyden a little before he embarked on his Britiſh expedition [18]. Though this kingdom was of ſmall extent, it was very populous; and ſeveral of its princes bore a conſiderable ſway in the heptarchy. The city of Canterbury, the Durovernum of the Romans, and the Cair Ceint of the Britons, was the capital of the kingdom of Kent, and one of the moſt conſiderable cities in England in the Saxon times.

Kingdom of Eſſex.

4. To the north-eaſt of Kent, the kingdom of Eſſex, or of the Eaſt and Middle Saxons, was ſituated, comprehending only the counties of Eſſex and Middleſex, and a part of Hertfordſhire. This kingdom, as its name imports, was founded and poſſeſſed by a colony of Saxons; but though it was rich and populous, and had the famous city of London for its capital, it made no diſtinguiſhed figure in the heptarchy, its

[17] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15. Ethelwerd, l. 1.
[18] Camd. Britan. præf. col. 157.

princes being for the moſt part in a ſtate of dependence on thoſe of Kent.

5. To the north-eaſt of the kingdom of Eſſex that of the Eaſt-Angles was ſituated, comprehending the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, Norfolk, and the iſle of Ely. This kingdom was founded and inhabited by Angles, who landed in that part of Britain, becauſe it was not preoccupied by their neighbours the Saxons or Iutes, and lay neareſt to their own country [19]. It was bounded on the eaſt and north by the ocean, on the ſouth by Eſſex, and on the weſt by St. Edmund's ditch, dividing it from Mercia. The capital of Eaſt-Anglia was Dunwich, called by Bede Domnoc, a place of conſiderable note in the Britiſh, Roman, and Saxon times, but now ſwallowed up by the ſea [20]. Kingdom of Eaſt-Anglia.

6. In the very centre of England lay the powerful and extenſive kingdom of Mercia, comprehending (beſides a part of Hertfordſhire) no fewer than ſixteen of our preſent counties, viz. Huntingdon, Rutland, Lincoln, Northampton, Leiceſter, Derby, Nottingham, Oxford, Cheſter, Salop, Gloceſter, Worceſter, Stafford, Warwick, Buckingham, Bedford. This kingdom was erected and poſſeſſed alſo by the Angles, and was therefore ſometimes called the kingdom of the Mediterranean Engliſh [21]. It derived its more common name of Mercia from its ſituation, Kingdom of Mercia.

[19] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.
[20] Id. l. 2. c. 15. Camd. Britan. v. 1. p. 448.
[21] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 3. c. 21.

bordering upon the marches of all the other kingdoms of the heptarchy, as well as of Wales. This ſituation had both its advantages and diſadvantages; for as it gave the kings of Mercia an opportunity of invading all their neighbours, ſo it expoſed them to the danger of being aſſaulted on all ſides. Leiceſter, the Ratæ of the Romans, was the capital of Mercia.

Kingdom of Northumberland.

7. The ſeventh kingdom of the heptarchy was that of Northumberland, ſo called from its ſituation to the north of the Humber. This kingdom was alſo very extenſive, comprehending all that part of England which lies to the north of the Humber and Merſey, and all that part of Scotland which lies to the ſouth of the Forth. The Northumbrian territories were ſometimes divided into the two kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia; of which the former, whoſe capital was York, comprehended the country between the Humber and the Tyne; and the latter, whoſe capital was Bamburgh, the country between the Tyne and the Forth. All theſe countries were inhabited by Angles, though probably with a great mixture of Iutes; for Octa and Ebiſſa, who ſettled a large colony in the deſolated country between the walls of Severus and Antoninus Pius very early, were nearly related to Hengiſt the firſt king of Kent. We may be apt to be ſurpriſed, that the Angles, who were not near ſo numerous or powerful as the Iutes and Saxons, conquered and took poſſeſſion of more than two-thirds of England (to which they gave

gave their name), beſides a conſiderable part of Scotland. But the reaſon of this ſeems to have been, that the Iutes and Saxons only ſent a few bands of adventurers into Britain, the body of theſe nations ſtill continuing at home; while the Angles removed almoſt entirely from the continent into this iſland, leaving their native ſeats deſolate; in which condition, Bede aſſures us, they remained in his time[22].

Such, in general, were the ſituations and limits of the ſeveral kingdoms of the heptarchy, and the Germanic nations by which they were originally erected and inhabited. Though ſome of theſe kingdoms were very ſmall, and none of them, except thoſe of Mercia and Northumberland, of any great extent, yet we have good reaſon to believe, that they were ſubdivided into ſmaller diſtricts, for the more convenient adminiſtration both of the civil and military government. The Anglo-Saxon territories in Germany were ſubdivided into what the Roman hiſtorians call *pagi et vici*; which may not improperly be tranſlated *ſhires and townſhips*, or *hundreds*; and we may be almoſt certain, that they ſubdivided the territories of each ſtate in a ſimilar manner as ſoon as they ſettled in this iſland[23]. Such ſubdiviſions, and their reſpective governors, are frequently mentioned by our hiſtorians long before the end of the heptarchy[24]. Subdiviſions of theſe kingdoms.

[22] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 1. c. 15.

[23] Tacit. de morib. German. ch. 12. Cæſar Bel. Gal. l. 6. Cluver. German. p. 91.

[24] Bed. l. 4. c. 4. l. 5. c. 4. 15. W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 4.

It is not therefore ſtrictly true, that Alfred the Great was the firſt who divided England into ſhires, hundreds, &c. though it is very probable, that great prince made a new and more regular diviſion than that which had ſubſiſted before his time. The reader will find an account of a political diviſion of all that part of England which lies to the ſouth of the Humber, ſpecifying the number of hides, or plough-lands, in each diſtrict, in the work quoted below[25]. This diviſion was evidently very ancient, and ſubſiſted in the time of the heptarchy.

Political diviſions of Wales.

It is quite impoſſible to give an exact delineation of the political diviſions of the territories of the Britiſh or Welſh princes from the eſtabliſhment to the end of the heptarchy. The number of theſe princes who flouriſhed at the ſame time often varied. From Gildas we learn, that there were five Britiſh kings or princes who reigned over ſo many little principalities of the Britons, about the middle of the ſixth century, when he wrote his ſatirical epiſtle againſt theſe princes[26]. Soon after, the number of theſe princes and principalities appear to have been ſix, viz. Guynedh, Powys, Dehewbarth, Reynnuc, Eſylluc, Morgannuc[27]. The truth is, that every thing was fluctuating and unſettled among the unhappy Britons in this period; and the number and limits of their little principalities were per-

25 Scriptores Britan. edit. a Gale, l. 1. p. 748.

26 Epiſt. Gildæ ſub init.

27 Humph-Lhuyd. Fragment. Britan. p. 51.

petually

petually changing, by the fortune of war, and the fatal cuſtom of dividing the territories of a prince at his death among all his ſons. By this cuſtom, the territories of the Britons were ſometimes ſubdivided into an incredible number of little ſtates, which were ſubject to an equal number of petty tyrants, conſtantly at war with each other, and an eaſy prey to their common enemies the Saxons. Without attempting to deſcribe the limits of theſe little temporary ſtates, which were almoſt daily changing, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that the moſt common and laſting diviſion of the Britiſh territories in this period, was into the three following principalities or kingdoms. 1. Dehewbarth, now South Wales, the country of the brave Silures. This principality was anciently divided into the ſix diſtricts of, (1.) Cairdigan, now Cardiganſhire; (2.) Dyvet, now Pembrokeſhire; (3.) Cairmarden, now Carmarthenſhire; (4.) Morganive, now Glamorganſhire; (5.) Guent, now Monmouthſhire; (6.) Brecknock, now Brecknockſhire. The chief reſidence or capital of the ancient princes of South Wales, was Cairmarden, and ſometimes Dinevor caſtle. 2. The principality of Matheaual, or Powyſland, the country of the Demetæ, was divided into three diſtricts of Powys-Vadoc, Powys between the Wye and Severn, and Powys Wanwynwyn. The chief reſidence of the ancient princes of Powyſland, was firſt at Pengwern, now Shrewſbury, and afterwards at Mothraul. 3. The principality

lity of Gwyneth, now North Wales, the country of the Ordovices, was divided into the four diſtricts of Mon, now Angleſey; Avuon, now Caernarvon; Meryonyth, now Merionethſhire; and y Berwedhwlod, now Denbighſhire and Flintſhire. The chief reſidence of the princes of Gwyneth, or North Wales, was at Aberfrau, in the iſle of Angleſey. Each of theſe diſtricts or provinces in the three principalities of Wales, were ſubdivided into ſo many Cantreves, and theſe again into ſo many Commots; ſo as to make fifty-one Cantreves, and one hundred and fifty-eight Commots, in all Wales [28].

Political diviſions of Scotland.

That part of Great Britain, which hath for many ages been called *Scotland*, was, in the times of the heptarchy, inhabited by four nations, viz. 1. the Angles, or Engliſh, of the kingdom of Bernicia; 2. the Strath-Cluyd Britons; 3. the Scots; 4. the Picts. The limits of the kingdom of Bernicia have been already deſcribed. The country of the Strath-Cluyd Britons, commonly called the kingdom or principality of Cumbria, was a ſcene of greater confuſion, and of more frequent revolutions, than even Wales itſelf in this period. When this principality was in a flouriſhing ſtate, it extended from the river Ribble in Lancaſhire along the weſtern coaſt to the mouth of the Clyde, where its capital, Al-Cluyd, now Dumbarton, was ſituated. But in the ſixth and ſeventh centuries, this country was

[28] See Speed's Deſcription of Wales.

torn in pieces by many petty tyrants, which expoſed the ſouth parts of it to be ſubdued by the Engliſh kings of Deira and Bernicia, and the north parts by the Scots and Picts[29]. The territories of the Scots, in the beginning of this period, were neither large nor fertile. Their limits are thus deſcribed in two of the moſt ancient chronicles now extant: "Fergus, the ſon "of Erc, reigned over Albany, from Drumal-"bin to the ſea of Ireland and Inchegall[30]." From this deſcription, it ſeems probable, that the Scots, before they ſubdued the Picts, poſſeſſed only that part of Caledonia which lies along the weſt and north ſea from the frith of Clyde to the Orkneys; and that their territories were divided from thoſe of the Picts on the eaſt by thoſe high mountains which run from Loch-lomond to the frith of Taine[31]. The Picts poſſeſſed all the reſt of Scotland beyond the frith of Forth, and had frequent diſputes with the Northumbrian kings about the country between the Forth and Tweed; which though almoſt wholly inhabited by Anglo-Saxons, was ſometimes under the government of the Picts; who, before the extinction of their monarchy, had even extended their dominion over all the weſt parts of Scotland, which lay between the friths of Clyde and Solway[32].

[29] Carte's Hiſt. v. 1. p. 210—213.
[30] Innes's Eſſays, Append. N° 1. N° 4.
[31] See Dr. Macpherſon's Diſſertations, p. 332, &c.
[32] Id. ibid.

Such

Eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh and Scotch monarchies.

Such were the political diviſions of Great Britain from the beginning of the ſixth to the middle of the ninth century. About that time a great change took place in the diſtribution of power in this iſland, by the eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh monarchy in the ſouth on the ruins of the heptarchy, and of the Scotch monarchy in the north, on the ruins of the Pictiſh kingdom. Soon after this great revolution, the two kingdoms of England and Scotland arrived at the ſame limits which they ever after retained (with ſome ſmall and temporary variations), until they were happily united into one empire, in the beginning of the preſent century.

Political diviſion of England by Alfred the Great.

Not long after the eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh monarchy, Alfred the Great made a new and more regular diviſion of his whole kingdom, very different from that which had ſubſiſted under the heptarchy in many reſpects. In order to form this diviſion with greater exactneſs, that wiſe and active prince commanded a ſurvey of all his territories to be taken, and recorded in the book of Wincheſter[33]. From this book, which contained a deſcription of the rivers, mountains, woods, cities, towns, and villages, with an account of the number of plough-lands and inhabitants in each diſtrict, he divided the whole into a certain number of ſhires, nearly, though not exactly, the ſame with our preſent counties. Each ſhire was again divided into trithings or

[33] Ingulf. Hiſt.

lethis;

leths; of which diviſion there are ſtill ſome veſtiges in the ridings of Yorkſhire, the leths of Kent, and the rapes of Suſſex[34]. Every trithing was ſubdivided into ſo many centuries or hundreds, and each hundred into ten decennaries or diſtricts, containing ten families, or near that number, for in ſuch diſtributions, it was impoſſible to be quite preciſe and accurate. All the members of each decennary were mutual pledges for each other's obedience to the laws, and anſwerable, with ſome equitable reſtrictions, for their diſobedience[35]. Whoever was not a member of ſome decennary, was conſidered as a vagabond, who could claim no protection or benefit from the laws of his country. In each of theſe diviſions of ſhires, trithings, hundreds, and decennaries, that wiſe king appointed certain magiſtrates and courts, which ſhall be hereafter deſcribed. It is impoſſible to conceive any diſtribution more admirably contrived than this, for preſerving peace and good order, and bringing all the members of the ſociety under the immediate eye of the law, as every member of it had nine perſons, beſides himſelf, who were anſwerable for his good behaviour.

State of population in Britain in this period.

Britain was far from being populous in the period we are now conſidering. Of this the moſt ample evidence, as well as the moſt ſatisfactory reaſons, may be given. The Scots and Picts had

34 Spelman Vita Ælfridi, p. 74.

35 Wilkins Leges Saxonicæ, p. 20—204.

almoſt

almoſt quite depopulated a great part of provincial Britain before the arrival of the Saxons[35]. Thoſe dangerous auxiliaries becoming enemies, extirpated, enſlaved, or expelled, all the ancient inhabitants of the beſt part of Britain, in erecting their ſeven kingdoms. After theſe kingdoms were erected, their cruel and inceſſant wars againſt each other prevented their becoming populous. When thoſe ſeven kingdoms were united into one monarchy, new enemies appeared, no leſs deſtructive to population than any of the former, and prevented the happy effects of that union. The fatal rage of building monaſteries, and crowding them with uſeleſs monks and nuns; this rage, I ſay, which ſeized the kings and nobility of England, after the eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh monarchy, contributed not a little to impede the increaſe of people in that period. The very imperfect ſtate of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, which occaſioned frequent and deſtructive famines, is at once an evidence and a cauſe of a ſcanty population in thoſe times. As a further evidence of this, it may be obſerved, that there were very few cities or towns in Britain in this period, and theſe few were ſmall and thinly peopled. In Scotland, there was not perhaps ſo much as one place that merited the name of a city; and in South Britain, where the Romans had built ſo great a number of towns, we are told by Nennius, there were only twenty-

[35] Gildæ Hiſt. c. 11—26.

eight

eight remaining in the ſeventh century[37]. There is the cleareſt evidence from Doomſday-book, that not one of theſe cities, even at the end of this period (London and Wincheſter perhaps excepted), contained ten thouſand inhabitants; and the greateſt part of them contained only a few hundreds[38]. York, which is the greateſt city mentioned in that famous record, contained only 1418 houſes, of which there were 540 uninhabited[39]. In Exeter there were only 315 houſes, and in Warwick 223. Upon the whole, it ſeems very probable, that Britain was not much more populous in the times of the heptarchy, than it had been in the ancient Britiſh times before the firſt Roman invaſion; not half ſo populous as in the flouriſhing times of the Roman government; and that from the eſtabliſhment of the Engliſh monarchy to the conqueſt, it did not at any time contain above one million and a half of people. So fatal was the fall of the Roman empire to the populouſneſs of its provinces, and ſo ſlowly was that loſs repaired!

[37] Nennii Hiſt. Brit. c. 65. See Appendix, N° 11.
[38] Brady on Burghs, paſſim. [39] Id. p. 10.

SECTION II.

The hiſtory of the different ranks of people,—of magiſtrates,—and of courts of juſtice, in Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, to the landing of William duke of Normandy, A. D. 1066.

Subject of this ſection.

HAVING, in the preceding ſection, given a brief delineation of the political diviſions of the Britiſh territories, in the period we are now conſidering, into kingdoms, provinces or ſhires, trithings, hundreds, and decennaries, it is proper to proceed in taking a view—of the ſeveral ranks of people by whom theſe territories were inhabited, with their reſpective rights and privileges,—the magiſtrates by whom theſe different diſtricts or diviſions were governed, with their ſeveral powers,—and the various courts in which theſe magiſtrates preſided. In doing this, it ſeems moſt natural to begin at the loweſt rank of people, magiſtrates, and courts, and regularly proceed to the higher; as this is the courſe in which appeals proceed in the adminiſtration of juſtice.

Slaves.

The loweſt order of people among the Anglo-Saxons, and the other nations of Britain, in this period, were ſlaves, who, with their wives and children,

children, were the property of their maſters [1]. Beſides thoſe who were native ſlaves, or ſlaves by birth, others frequently fell into this wretched ſtate, by various means; as, by an ill run at play,—by the fate of war,—or by forfeiting their freedom by their crimes, or even by contracting debts which they were not able to pay [2]. Theſe unhappy people, who were very numerous, formed an article both of internal and foreign trade; only if the ſlave was a Chriſtian, he was not to be ſold to a Jew or a Pagan; or if he belonged to the ſame nation with his maſter, he was not to be ſold beyond ſea [3]. Slaves, however, were of various kinds among the Anglo-Saxons, employed in various works, and were not all in an equal ſtate of thraldom. Some of them were called *villani*, or *villans*, becauſe they dwelt at the villages belonging to their maſters, and performed the ſervile labours of cultivating their lands, to which they were annexed, and transferred with theſe lands from one owner to another [4]. Others were domeſtic ſlaves, and performed various offices about the houſes and families of their maſters [5]. Some of theſe domeſtic ſlaves of the king and the nobility were taught the mechanic arts, which they practiſed for the benefit of their owners; and the greateſt

[1] Reliquiæ Spelman. p. 250, 251. Leges Wallicæ, p. 206—324.
[2] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 24. Leges Inæ, c. 7.
[3] Ibid. Eigbright Excerpt. c. 149, 150.
[4] Gloſſar. Spelman. and Du Cange in voc. Villanus.
[5] Leges Wallicæ, p. 453.

number of the mechanics of thoſe times ſeem to have been in a ſtate of ſervitude[6]. Slaves were not ſuppoſed to have any family or relations who ſuſtained any loſs by their death; and therefore when one of them was killed by his maſter, no mulct was paid, becauſe the maſter was ſuppoſed to be the only loſer; when ſlain by another, his price or manbote was paid to his maſter[7]. In a word, ſlaves of the loweſt order were conſidered merely as animals of burden, and parts of their owner's living ſtock. In the laws of Wales, it is expreſsly ſaid, "That a maſter hath the ſame "right to his ſlaves as to his cattle[8]."

Slavery mitigated and diminiſhed.

The horrors of this cruel ſervitude were gradually mitigated; and many of thoſe unhappy wretches were raiſed from this abject ſtate to the privileges of humanity. The introduction of Chriſtianity contributed not a little, both to alleviate the weight of ſervitude, and diminiſh the number of ſlaves. By the canons of the church, which were in thoſe times incorporated with the laws of the land, and of the ſame authority, Chriſtians were commanded to allow their ſlaves certain portions of time to work for their own benefit; by which they acquired property,—the biſhops had authority to regulate the quantity of work to be done by ſlaves,—and to take care that no man uſed his ſlave harſhly, but as a fellow-Chriſtian[9]. The biſhops and clergy re-

[6] Du Cange ad voc. Servi miniſteriales. [7] Leges Wallicæ, p. 324.
[8] Id. p. 206. [9] Spel. Concil. p. 405, &c.

com-

commended the manumiſſion of ſlaves as a moſt charitable and meritorious action: and in order to ſet the example, they procured a law to be made, that all the Engliſh ſlaves of every biſhop ſhould be ſet at liberty at his death; and that every other biſhop and abbot in the kingdom ſhould ſet three ſlaves at liberty [10]. But after all theſe mitigations of the ſeverities of ſlavery, and diminutions of the number of ſlaves, the yoke of ſervitude was ſtill very heavy, and the greateſt part of the labourers, mechanics, and common people, groaned under that yoke at the concluſion of this period [11].

Frilazin.

The next claſs or rank of people in Britain, in this period, was compoſed of thoſe who were called *frilazin*; who had been ſlaves, but had either purchaſed, or by ſome other means obtained, their liberty [12]. Though theſe were in reality free men, they were not conſidered as of the ſame rank and dignity with thoſe who had been born free; but were ſtill in a more ignoble and dependent condition, either on their former maſters, or on ſome new patrons. This cuſtom the Anglo-Saxons ſeem to have derived from their anceſtors in Germany, among whom thoſe who had been made free did not differ much in point of dignity or importance in the ſtate, from thoſe who continued in ſervitude [13]. This diſtinction, between thoſe who had been made free,

[10] Spel. Concil. p. 330, 331. [11] Vide Doomſday-book paſſim.
[12] Spel. Gloſſ. in voc. [13] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 25.

and thoſe who enjoy freedom by deſcent from a long race of freemen, ſtill prevails in many parts of Germany; and particularly in the original ſeats of the Anglo-Saxons[14]. Many of the inhabitants of towns and cities in England, in this period, ſeem to have been of this claſs of men who were in a kind of middle ſtate between ſlaves and freemen[15].

Ceorls. The third claſs or rank of people in Britain, in the period we are now conſidering, conſiſted of thoſe who were completely free, and deſcended from a long race of freemen. This numerous and reſpectable body of men, who were called *ceorls*, conſtituted a middle claſs, between the labourers and mechanics (who were generally ſlaves, or deſcended from ſlaves), on the one hand, and the nobility on the other. They might go where they pleaſed, and purſue any way of life that was moſt agreeable to their humour; but ſo many of them applied to agriculture, and farming the lands of the nobility, that a ceorl was the moſt common name for a huſbandman or farmer in the Anglo-Saxon times[16]. Theſe ceorls, however, ſeem in general to have been a kind of gentlemen farmers; and if any one of them proſpered ſo well as to acquire the property of five hydes of land, upon which he had a church, a kitchen, a bell-houſe, and great gate, and obtained a ſeat and office in the king's

[14] Heinexii Elementa Juris German. t. 6. p. 27.
[15] Brady of Burghs. [16] Somner, Dictionar. Saxon.

court,

court, he was eſteemed a nobleman or thane[17]. If a ceorl applied to learning, and attained to prieſt's orders, he was alſo conſidered as a thane; his weregild, or price of his life, was the ſame, and his teſtimony had the ſame weight in a court of juſtice[18]. When he applied to trade, and made three voyages beyond ſea, in a ſhip of his own, and with a cargo belonging to himſelf, he was alſo advanced to the dignity of a thane[19]. But if a ceorl had a greater propenſity to arms than to learning, trade, or agriculture, he then became the ſithcundman, or military retainer, to ſome potent and warlike earl, and was called the *huſcarle* of ſuch an earl[20]. If one of theſe huſcarles acquitted himſelf ſo well as to obtain from his patron, either five hydes of land, or a gilt ſword, helmet, and breaſtplate, as a reward of his valour, he was likewiſe conſidered as a thane[21]. Thus the temple of honour ſtood open to theſe ceorls, whether they applied themſelves to agriculture, commerce, letters, or arms, which were then the only profeſſions eſteemed worthy of a freeman.

Thanes.

All thoſe above the rank of ceorls were thanes or nobles. There were ſeveral degrees of nobility, or of thanes, among the Anglo-Saxons, though it is very difficult to mark the diſtinctions

[17] Wilkins Leges Saxonicæ, p. 70.
[18] Spel. Concil. p. 405.
[19] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 71.
[20] Spelman's Gloſſ. in voc.
[21] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 71.

between theſe degrees with certainty and preciſion. The earl's or alderman's thane ſeems to have been the loweſt degree of nobility; and next to him he who had been advanced to that dignity on account of his promotion in the church, or his ſucceſs in trade or agriculture[22]. The king's thanes ſeem to have been of three different degrees, according to their different degrees of wealth, or favour at court, as appears from the hereots to be paid to the king at their death. The hereot of a king's thane of the loweſt rank was one horſe ſaddled, and the thane's arms;—of the ſecond or middle rank, two horſes, one ſaddled and one unſaddled, two ſwords, two ſpears, two ſhields, and fifty mancuſſes of gold;—of the firſt or higheſt rank, four horſes, two ſaddled and two unſaddled, four ſwords, four ſpears, four ſhields, and one hundred mancuſſes of gold[23]. This is a ſufficient proof, that theſe three claſſes of thanes were very different from each other in point of wealth and dignity; though they were all noble, attendants upon, and retainers of the king; the great ornaments of his court in times of peace, and the chief defence of his perſon in times of war.

The Anglo-Saxon thanes the ſame with the ancient German Comites.

Nothing can be more obvious than that the Anglo-Saxon thanes, or nobles, were the genuine deſcendants and repreſentatives of the ancient German companions of their princes, who

[22] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 71. [23] Id. p. 114.

are

are thus deſcribed by Tacitus: "The moſt noble "are not aſhamed to appear among the compa- "nions and attendants of their brave and war- "like princes. Of theſe companions there are "different ranks, according to their different "degrees of favour with the princes whom they "attend; which fires them with ambition to ac- "quire the firſt place in their eſteem. Nor are "princes leſs ambitious to increaſe the number "and valour of their retainers: for to be ſur- "rounded by a numerous band of brave un- "daunted followers, is their glory, their ſtrength, "their ornament in peace, their defence in war. "In the day of battle, the prince ſtrives to ex- "cel his followers in acts of valour, and they "to imitate his example; he fights for victory, "and they for him. From him they receive the "plenteous feaſt, the war-horſe, and bloody "ſpear, as the marks of his approbation, and "the rewards of their attachment[24]." Hengiſt and Horſa, and Cerdic, and all the other Anglo-Saxon chieftains, who founded kingdoms in Britain, were attended by numerous bands of theſe brave companions, thanes, or followers, who contributed greatly to their ſucceſs. When the conqueſts, therefore, were completed by the expulſion, ſubmiſſion, or ſlaughter of the native Britons, the conquerors, with general conſent, beſtowed certain portions of the conquered lands

[24] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 13, 14.

on theſe valiant companions of their toils and victories. Theſe lands were called *thanelands*, and were granted with that frank and generous ſpirit with which rude unpoliſhed warriors are animated; without any of thoſe painful reſtrictions, and manifold ſervices and preſtations, that were afterwards invented by artful feudaliſts. For the Anglo-Saxon thanes were under no obligations on account of their lands, except the three following, which were indiſpenſably neceſſary to the defence and improvement of their country:—To attend the king with their followers in military expeditions,—to aſſiſt in building and defending the royal caſtles,—and in keeping the bridges and highways in proper repair[25]. To theſe obligations all proprietors of land (even the churchmen for a long time not excepted) were ſubjected; and theſe ſervices were conſidered as due to their country, rather than to the perſons of their kings; and were agreed to by all as being neceſſary to their own preſervation and conveniency. Such were the thanes or nobles of England, and of the lowlands of Scotland, where the Saxon language was ſpoken, in the times we are now conſidering; and ſuch indeed were the nobles in all the kingdoms of Europe that were founded by the northern nations on the ruins of the Roman empire, being all called by names of the ſame

[25] Reliquiæ Spelman. p. 22.

import

import and meaning[26]. Among the Scots and Picts, the genuine deſcendants of the ancient Caledonians, thoſe who bore the greateſt reſemblance to the Anglo-Saxon thanes, were called *tierna*; and among the Welſh, the true poſterity of the ancient Britons, *teyrn*, which ſignify, the great proprietors of land[27].

State of the thanes and of their lands.

The thanes, who were the only nobility among the Anglo-Saxons, were a very numerous body of men, comprehending all the conſiderable landholders in England, and filling up that ſpace in ſociety between the ceorls or yeomanry on the one hand, and the royal family on the other; which is now occupied both by the nobility and gentry. In times of war, they conſtituted the flower of their armies, and in times of peace they ſwelled the trains of their kings, and added greatly to the ſplendour of their courts, eſpecially at the three great feſtivals of Chriſtmas, Eaſter, and Whitſuntide. From this body all the chief officers, both civil and military, as aldermen, greeves, earls, heretogens, &c. were taken; and to obtain ſome of theſe offices was the great object of their ambition. Before they obtained an office, their lands were their only ſupport, and they lived in

[26] Thegan, or thane, ſignifies a miniſter or honourable retainer, from the verb *thenian*, to miniſter. The Vaſſes, Drudes, Leudes, Antruſtiones, Gaſſendii, and Gardingii of the Lombards, Franks, Goths, and Wiſigoths, were all nobles of the ſame kind and origin with our thanes; and all theſe names ſignify miniſters or retainers. See Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 125.

[27] Macpherſon's Diſſertat. p. 179.

greater

greater or leſs affluence, according to the extent of their eſtates. Theſe they divided into two parts; one of which they called their *inlands*, and the other their *outlands*. Their inlands they kept in their own immediate poſſeſſion, and cultivated them by the hands of their ſlaves and villains, in order to raiſe proviſions for their families; their outlands they granted to ceorls or farmers, either for one year, or for a term of years; for which they received a certain ſtipulated proportion of their produce annually. Theſe cuſtoms had long prevailed among their anceſtors in Germany, and were adhered to by their poſterity in England to the concluſion of this period [28].

Princes of the blood.

The princes of the ſeveral royal families among the Anglo-Saxons were conſidered as of a rank ſuperior to the other nobles, and diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Clitones*, or *Illuſtrious* [29]. The eldeſt ſon of the reigning prince, or the preſumptive heir of the crown, was called the *Æthcling*, or the *Moſt Noble*, and was the next perſon in dignity after the king and queen [30]. Among the ancient Britons or Welſh, in the beginning of this period, the preſumptive heir of the crown or principality was called *Gurthddrychiad*, or the *appointed Prince*; but by their frequent intercourſe with, and partial ſubjection to the Engliſh, they gradually adopted many of

[28] Tacit. de moiib. German. c. 25. [29] Spelman. Gloſſ. in voc.
[30] Id. ibid. in voc.

their

their laws, cuſtoms, and titles of honour; and particularly called their heir-apparent the *Edling*. This prince had many high privileges and conſiderable revenues aſſigned him, to enable him to ſupport his dignity. All the king's officers and ſervants were commanded to obey and ſerve the Edling, whenever he required them, without reward; and he had the free uſe of all the royal houſes, horſes, dogs, hawks, &c. [31] Among the Scots and Picts, in this period, the preſumptive, or rather the appointed heir, to their reſpective crowns, was called the *Taniſt*, and enjoyed the ſame honours and privileges with the Ætheling of the Engliſh, and the Edling of the Welſh [32].

Such were the ſeveral ranks in ſociety among the Anglo-Saxons, and other nations of Britain, in the period we are now examining, viz. ſlaves, freedmen, ceorls, thanes, and princes of the blood. In this enumeration no notice hath been taken of the fair ſex, becauſe they were always of the ſame rank with their parents before marriage, and with their huſbands after marriage; except female ſlaves, who did not become free by marrying a freeman, but were commonly made free before, in order to render them capable of ſuch a marriage [33]. Ranks of women.

It is now proper to take a view of thoſe who were inveſted with offices among the Anglo- Anglo-Saxon magiſtrates, &c.

[31] Leges Wallicæ, l. 1. c. 9. [32] Dr. Macpherſon's Diſſert. 13.
[33] Hickeſii Diſſertatio epiſtolaris, p. 13.

Saxons,

Saxons, and other Britiſh nations, in this period, with the powers and emoluments annexed to theſe offices, the courts in which thoſe who held them preſided, and ſuch other circumſtances as are worthy of attention, and can be diſcovered.

Slaves incapable of being magiſtrates.

The loweſt, though they were the moſt numerous claſs of men among the Anglo-Saxons, were abſolutely incapable of any office of power, truſt, or honour; for being ſlaves themſelves, and not their own maſters, they could have no authority over others, even over their own wives and children. The truth is, thoſe unhappy men could not ſo much as call their lives their own; for theſe might have been taken from them by their maſters with perfect impunity, and by any other perſon, for paying their price to their owners [34]. For ſome time after the ſettlement of the Saxons in England, their ſlaves were in the ſame circumſtances with their horſes, oxen, cows, and ſheep, except that it was not faſhionable to kill and eat them. After the introduction of Chriſtianity, the government began to take ſome notice of this miſerable claſs of men, and to make ſome little diſtinctions between them and other animals. By one law, if a maſter gave his ſlave a blow, of which he died within twenty-four hours, he was to pay a ſmall mulct to the king; by another, a maſter was not allowed to pay his fine for being guilty of adul-

34 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 25.

tery,

tery, in ſlaves, but only in cattle or money; but ſtill they were very far from being capable of any office [35]. Even thoſe ſlaves who obtained their freedom, very ſeldom attained to any office of power or truſt: thinking themſelves ſufficiently happy in being under the protection of government, they hardly ever aſpired to any ſhare in the adminiſtration of it [36].

Heads of families.

Among the ancient Germans, every father of a family was a kind of magiſtrate, and had a great degree of authority over his wife and children, though it doth not ſeem to have extended to the power of life and death, as it did among the Gauls [37]. After the Saxons ſettled in England, the maſters of families ſtill retained very great power; becauſe they were reſponſible to the public for the conduct of all the members of their reſpective families, and obliged to pay the fines for all the crimes which they committed. If a ſtranger ſtaid above three days and nights in any family, the maſter of that family acquired the ſame authority over him, becauſe he became in like manner anſwerable for his conduct [38].

Borſholder.

One of the loweſt magiſtrates among the Anglo-Saxons was called the *borſholder*, or *tithing-man*, whoſe authority extended only over one freeburgh, tithing, or decennary, conſiſting of ten families. Every freeman who wiſhed to

[35] Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 29. Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 877.
[36] Tacit. de morib. German, c. 25.
[37] Id. c. 19. Cæſar de Bel. Gal. l. 6. c. 19.
[38] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 9.

enjoy

enjoy the protection of the laws, and not to be treated as a vagabond, was under a neceſſity of being admitted a member of the tithing where he and his family reſided; and in order to obtain this admiſſion, it was as neceſſary for him to maintain a good reputation; becauſe all the members of each tithing being mutual pledges and ſureties for each other, and the whole tithing ſureties to the king for the good behaviour of all its members, they were very cautious of admitting any into their ſociety who were of bad or doubtful characters. Each tithing formed a little ſtate or commonwealth within itſelf, and choſe one of its moſt reſpectable members for its head, who was ſometimes called the alderman of ſuch a tithing or freeburgh, on account of his age and experience, but moſt commonly *borſholder*, from the Saxon words *borh*, a ſurety, and *alder*, a head or chief[39]. This magiſtrate had authority to call together the members of his tithing, to preſide in their meetings, and to put their ſentences in execution. The members of each tithing, with their tithing-man or borſholder at their head, conſtituted a court of juſtice, in which all the little controverſies ariſing within the tithing were determined. If any diſpute of great difficulty or importance happened, or if either of the parties was not willing to ſubmit to a ſentence given in the tithing-court, the cauſe was referred, or appealed, to the next ſuperior

[39] Spelman. Gloſſ. p. 86.

court,

court, or court of the hundred. At theſe tithing-courts, the arms belonging to the tithing were from time to time produced and inſpected, new members were admitted, and teſtimonials given to ſuch members as had occaſion to remove into the bounds of another tithing. For as the tithing was anſwerable to the public for the good behaviour of all its members, no man could be member of a tithing in which he did not reſide; becauſe he could not be under the immediate inſpection of thoſe who were anſwerable for his conduct. If any member of a tithing committed a crime, and made his eſcape, the tithing to which he belonged was allowed thirty-one days to purſue and apprehend him. If the tithing did not produce the criminal at the end of that period, the head of that tithing, with two of its moſt reſpectable members, together with the heads of the three next tithings, and two members out of each, making in all a body of twelve men, were obliged to make oath before a ſuperior magiſtrate, "That none of the members "of the tithing to which the criminal belonged "had been accomplices in his crime;—that they "had not connived at his eſcape;—and that "they had been at all poſſible pains to appre-"hend and bring him to juſtice." If the tithing could not give this ample evidence of their perfect innocence, they were obliged to pay the mulct preſcribed by the law for the crime committed. The ſeverity of this laſt regulation was afterwards a little mitigated, and the oaths of all the

the members of the tithing to which the criminal belonged, to the above effect, were admitted as a ſufficient exculpation, provided they promiſed upon oath, at the ſame time, to preſent him to juſtice as ſoon as they could apprehend him [40].

Great union among the members of a tithing.

As all the members of a tithing were mutual ſureties, ſo they were commonly mutual friends. They were all of the ſame rank; becauſe thanes were not members of any tithing, the family of a thane being conſidered as a tithing within itſelf, and the thane reſponſible to the public for all its members [41]. A tithing was ſometimes called a neighbourſhip, and its members the neighbours, who were ſtrongly attached to each other's intereſt, and frequently united by the ties of blood. The neighbours fought in one band in the day of battle, and often eat at one table in the days of peace. If any quarrel happened at the common table of the neighbourſhip, a ſevere fine was paid by him who was to blame [42]. If one of the neighbours was wronged, all the reſt aſſiſted to procure redreſs; if one ſuſtained a loſs by fire, the death of cattle, or any other accident, all the reſt contributed to repair the loſs; if one of the neighbours became poor, the reſt ſupported him; all the neighbours attended all the funerals, marriages, and feſtivals of the neighbourſhip; and, finally, if one of the neigh-

40 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 201, 202. 41 Id. p. 202.
42 Id. p. 16.

bours,

bours, or members of a tithing, behaved ill, he was ſolemnly expelled the ſociety; which was one of the greateſt diſgraces and calamities in which a man could be involved[43]: from that moment he ſuſtained a total loſs of character, became an outlaw and vagabond, and was expoſed to a thouſand inſults.

Advantages of this inſtitution.

It doth not ſeem to be poſſible for human prudence to contrive any political arrangement more admirably adapted than this was, for promoting the peace and good order of ſociety. We need not therefore be ſurpriſed to hear of the prodigious effects it is ſaid to have produced, when it was fully eſtabliſhed and ſtrictly executed in the reign of Alfred the Great. "By "theſe means (ſays Ingulphus), ſo profound a "tranquillity, and ſuch perfect ſecurity, were "eſtabliſhed over all the land, that if a tra-"veller left, or loſt, ever ſo great a ſum of "money in the open fields or highways, he was "ſure of finding it next morning, or even a "month after, entire and untouched[44]."

Societies formed in imitation of tithings.

The advantages of this excellent inſtitution were ſo great, that many, both of the nobility and clergy, who were by law exempted from the neceſſity of being members of any tithing, formed voluntary aſſociations among themſelves upon the ſame plan. The learned Dr. Hickes hath publiſhed the rules which the members of ſeveral of theſe voluntary fraternities bound

[43] Spelman Vita Ælfridi, p. 73—82. [44] Ingulph. Hiſt.

themſelves to obſerve: from whence it appears, that they were exactly ſimilar to thoſe obſerved by the members of tithings or freeburgs [45]. Each of theſe voluntary aſſociations had a chief or head, inveſted with the ſame powers with a tithing-man or borſholder: moſt of them had alſo common tables, at which the members frequently feaſted together; ſeveral of their fines were paid in honey or malt, which were no doubt deſigned to be made into mead or ale for theſe entertainments; and when a quarrel happened at theſe feaſts, the offending party was obliged to pay the ſame fine that the member of a tithing was obliged to pay for the ſame offence [46]. In a word, there ſeems to have been no other difference between a *ſodalitium*, or fraternity of thanes, biſhops, abbots, and prieſts, and a tithing or freeburg of ceorls and freemen, but this, that the one was voluntary, and the other neceſſary. It even appears, that though the nobility and clergy were not obliged to become members of any tithing, as that would have implied a diſtruſt of their good behaviour, unbecoming their dignity and character; yet they were encouraged to form ſuch voluntary aſſociations among themſelves, for their own ſecurity, and the public good; and ſeveral laws were made reſpecting theſe voluntary aſſociations [47]. Whether the revival of this Anglo-Saxon inſti-

45 Hickeſii Diſſertatio epiſtol. p. 18—22. 46 Id. ibid.
47 Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 725. ſub fin. Spelman Con. p. 407. 495. 448.

tution

tution would be any improvement of the preſent ſyſtem of police, it doth not become a private member of ſociety to determine. It is perhaps too exact and perfect to be practicable, in a populous and extenſive empire.

The next magiſtrate ſuperior to the tithing-man in rank and power, was called the *hundredary*, who preſided over a diſtrict that contained ten tithings, or that diviſion of a ſhire that was called *a hundred*. This magiſtrate was commonly, if not always, a thane or nobleman reſiding within the hundred, and elected by the other members into his office; which was both honourable and lucrative[48]. It belonged to him—to appoint the times and places for the meetings of the hundred-court,—to preſide in that court,—to put its ſentences in execution,—to inſpect the arms belonging to the hundred, &c.; and for the performance of theſe offices, he received one third of all the fines impoſed in his court, with a certain quantity of corn from each member for maintaining his dogs, which deſtroyed wolves, foxes, and other noxious animals. The hundredary was the captain of his hundred in times of war, as well as their civil magiſtrate in times of peace. This office was known among the ancient Germans, and was long retained among the Franks, Lombards, and Wiſigoths, as well as the Anglo-Saxons[49]. The hundredary.

[48] Spelman Gloſſ. in voc. p. 301, &c.

[49] Lindenbrog. Gloſſ. voc. Centenarius. Tacit. de morib. German. c. 6. 12.

The hundred-court.

As the hundredary was the next magiſtrate above the tithing-man, ſo the hundred-court was the next above the tithing-court. All the members of the ſeveral tithings within the hundred were members of the hundred-court, and obliged to attend its meetings, under pretty ſevere penalties. This court commonly met once every month; and all the members, in imitation of their German anceſtors, came to it in their arms; from whence it obtained the name of the *wapentac*: for it was a conſtant cuſtom, at the beginning of each meeting, for all the members to touch the hundredary's ſpear with theirs, in token of their acknowledging his authority, and being ready to fight under his command[50]. In theſe courts, the arch-deacon, and ſometimes the biſhop, preſided with the hundredary, and both civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs were regulated; an inquiry was made into the ſtate of the ſeveral tithings; many petty cauſes came before them, either in the firſt inſtance, between perſons belonging to different tithings, or by appeals from the tithing-courts. The hundred-courts had not authority to condemn any perſon to death or ſlavery; and if any man thought himſelf injured by their deciſions, he might appeal to the trithing, or next ſuperior court[51]. The proceedings in theſe courts were very ſummary, and every

[50] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 203.

[51] Du Cange Gloſſ. voc. Centenarii. Spelman's Gloſſ. voc. Hundredarius, Wapentachium.

thing

thing was determined by the votes of all the members, the hundredary having only a right to collect the votes, and pronounce the ſentences. In theſe hundred-courts, ſales of land, and other important tranſactions between the members of the ſame hundred, were publiſhed and confirmed [52].

Government of towns.

The government of towns and cities in this period very much reſembled the government of rural hundreds. The chief magiſtrate in theſe places was commonly called the *alderman* or *towngrieve*, or if they were ſea-ports, the *portgrieve*; and each of theſe had the ſame authority in his town, or city, that the hundredary had in his hundred. The chief court in towns and cities was called the *burgemote*, or *folckmote*, at which all the burgeſſes attended, all the affairs of the community were regulated, and the diſputes between one burgeſs and another determined. Beſides the ſtated monthly meetings of this court, the alderman or portgrieve had authority to call extraordinary ones, upon ſudden emergencies, by the ſound of the motbell [53].

Trithingman and trithing-court.

The next magiſtrate above the hundredary was called the *trithingman* or *lathgrieve*, who preſided over that diviſion of a country that was called a *trithing*, and in ſome places a *lath*, which contained three, four, or more hundreds. The trithing-court in which this magiſtrate pre-

[52] Dugdale's Origines juridicales, p. 27.
[53] Wilkins Leges Saxonicæ, p. 204.

ſided, was compoſed of the members of the ſeveral hundred-courts within the trithing; and in it were tried appeals from the hundred-courts, and cauſes between members of different hundreds. In this court alſo the ſales of eſtates, laſt wills, and other important tranſactions, were publiſhed and confirmed [54]. But as this link in the chain of courts and magiſtrates was ſooner left out, as unneceſſary, than any of the reſt, and hath left fewer veſtiges behind it, a more minute deſcription of it would be improper.

Alderman or earl.

The next magiſtrate above the trithingman was the alderman, or, as he was called in the Daniſh times, the *earl*, of that diviſion of a kingdom that was called *ſhire*, or *county*. The alderman, or earl of a ſhire, was a perſon of the higheſt dignity, and greateſt power, among the Anglo-Saxons; and therefore this office was commonly enjoyed by the thanes of the largeſt eſtates and moſt ancient families. Poſſeſſed both of the civil and military government of his ſhire, the alderman was a little king within his own territories, and aſſumed the titles of *ſub king* and *prince* in ſubſcribing charters and other deeds [55]. When he appeared at the head of the military forces of his ſhire in times of war, he was called a *duke* or *heretogen*, which ſignify a *general* or *commander* of an army; and was indeed a high and potent prince [56]. In the

54 Wilkins Leges Saxonicæ, p. 204. Hiſt. Elienſ. apud Gale, t. 1. p. 479.

55 Selden's Tit. Hon. p. 502. 56 Spelman Gloſſ. p. 288.

moſt

moſt ancient times of the Anglo-Saxon government, the aldermen or earls were appointed by the king; but towards the concluſion of this period, theſe great officers ſeem to have been elected by the freeholders of the ſhire, in the ſhiregemot or county-court [57]. To enable them to ſupport their dignity, the earls enjoyed certain lands, which were called the *earls lands*, and had a right to one third of all the fines impoſed within the ſhire, and to ſeveral other perquiſites [58]. The office of earl was ſo far from being hereditary in the moſt ancient period of the Anglo-Saxon government, that it was not ſo much as for life, but only during the good pleaſure of the ſovereign, and their own good behaviour [59]. Towards the concluſion of this period, it appears, that the great earls were moſt commonly, though not always, ſucceeded by their ſons in their earldoms. But this ſeems to have been owing to the increaſing power of the ariſtocracy, and to the prodigious wealth and influence of a few great families, rather than to any formal change in the conſtitution. From the ſame cauſe, it became alſo very common in thoſe times, for one of theſe great thanes to poſſeſs two, three, or more earldoms; which rendered them too powerful for ſubjects, and at length enabled one of them to uſurp the crown [60].

[57] Annal. Saxon. p. 49. Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 205.
[58] Spel. Gloſſ. p. 141, 142. [59] Id. ibid. [60] Harold.

Shiregerieve.

As the aldermen or earls were always choſen from amongſt the greateſt thanes, who in thoſe times were generally more addicted to arms than to letters, they were but ill qualified for the adminiſtration of juſtice, and performing the civil duties of their offices. Some of theſe great men had alſo offices at court which required their attendance, or were abſent from their ſhires on other accounts; or ſo much engaged in hunting and other rural ſports, that they could not adminiſter juſtice in their own perſons. To remedy theſe inconveniencies, there was an officer in every ſhire, inferior indeed to the earl in dignity, but commonly his ſuperior in learning, and the knowledge of the laws, who was called the *ſhiregerieve;* and in the abſence of the alderman ſupplied his place. When the alderman was preſent, the ſhiregerieve was his aſſeſſor in judgment, and his chief miniſter in the diſcharge of every part of his duty[61]. In the moſt ancient times, the ſhiregerieves were appointed by the king, but (if we can depend on the teſtimony of the pretended laws of Edward the Confeſſor) they were afterwards choſen in the ſhiregemote[62]. All the other nations of Gothic and German origin, who founded kingdoms in different parts of Europe on the ruins of the Roman empire, had officers of the ſame kind with the Anglo-Saxon ſhiregerieves; which is a ſufficient evidence of their great antiquity[63].

[61] Spel. Gloſſ. in voc. Grafio. [62] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 263.
[63] Gloſſ. apud Lindenbrog. voc. Graphio.

After

Lawyers by profeſſion.

After the Anglo-Saxon laws were committed to writing, it became neceſſary that ſome perſons ſhould read and ſtudy them with particular attention, in order to underſtand their true intent and meaning. This gave riſe to lawyers by profeſſion, who, in the language of England in thoſe times, were called *ræd-boran* or *lahmen*, and in Latin *rhetores* or *cauſidici*[64]. Theſe were the ſame kind of perſons who were called *ſcabini*, *rachimburgi*, or *ſagibarones*, by the Germans, Longobards, Franks, and other nations of Europe, in the times we are now examining[65]; for all theſe are Teutonic words a little latinized, and of the ſame import with the ræd-boran and lahmen of the Anglo-Saxons; implying a capacity of reading, and a knowledge of the laws.

Aſſeſſors to the aldermen, &c.

Some of theſe lahmen, i. e. law-men, after having undergone an examination as to their knowledge of the law, were appointed aſſeſſors to the aldermen, ſhiregerieves, and hundredaries; and others of them acted as advocates and pleaders at the bar[66]. In the moſt ancient times, when there were but few who could read, or underſtood the laws, three of theſe law-men were thought ſufficient to aſſiſt an alderman or ſhiregerieve in judgment; but as the number of readers increaſed, the number of theſe aſſeſſors

64 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 125. Hiſt. Elienſ. apud Gale, t. 1. p. 469.

65 Du Cange Gloſſ. in voc. Scabini, Rachimburgi, Sagibarones. Heineccii Opera, t. 6. p. 642.

66 Hickeſii Diſſertat. epiſt. p. 34. Leges Walliciæ, p. 30. 124.

was

was raiſed, firſt to ſeven, and afterwards to twelve[67]. Theſe aſſeſſors, who were in reality judges, took a ſolemn oath, that they would faithfully diſcharge the duties of their office, and not ſuffer any innocent man to be condemned, nor any guilty perſon to be acquitted[68]. Ingulphus ſeems to think, that Alfred the Great was the firſt who inſtituted this order of law-men as aſſeſſors to the ordinary judges; but there is ſufficient evidence, that this inſtitution was more ancient, both in England and in other nations of Europe[69]. Theſe ancient ſages of the law are very plainly deſcribed in the laws of king Ina, who flouriſhed in the end of the ſeventh and beginning of the eighth century. "If any fight "in the houſe of an alderman, or in the houſe of "one of the famous wiſe men, let him make "compenſation with ſixty ſhillings[70]."

Not the ſame with jurors.

Some learned men have been of opinion, that the ræd-boran and lahmen of the Anglo-Saxons, were the ſame with the jurors or jurymen of more modern times, who have acted a very important part in the adminiſtration of juſtice in England for ſeveral ages paſt. But this opinion is evidently liable to very ſtrong objections. It is founded on one law of king Alfred's, and two of king Ethelred's, which merit a moment's con-

[67] Du Cange Gloſſ. voc. Sagibarones. Id. voc. Rachimburgi. Wilkins Leges Saxon p. 125.

[68] Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 117. Leges Wallicæ, p. 30.

[69] Ingulf Hiſt. Croyland in Alfred.

[70] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 16.

ſideration.

ſideration. King Alfred's law may be thus tranſlated: "If a king's thane is accuſed of mur-"der, let him purge himſelf by twelve king's "thanes. If an inferior thane is accuſed, let "him purge himſelf by eleven of his equals, and "one king's thane[71]." This law ſeems rather to relate to compurgators, which will be hereafter deſcribed, than to jurors. The firſt law of Ethelred is to this purpoſe,—"That there may "be a court held in every wapontack, let "twelve of the moſt venerable thanes, with the "gerieve, ſtand forth and ſwear on the holy "things put into their hands, that they will not "condemn any innocent, nor acquit any guilty "perſon[72]." This law directs the manner of conſtituting the judges in the hundred-courts, which were the preſident and his twelve aſſeſſors, forming a permanent body. The ſecond law of Ethelred is this: "Twelve law-men ſhall ad-"miniſter juſtice between the Welſh and Engliſh, "ſix Engliſhmen and ſix Welſhmen[73]." This was rather an article of a treaty than a law, and conſtituted a court to determine controverſies between the ſubjects of different ſtates. In the fifth volume, we ſhall have an opportunity of inveſtigating the origin of juries.

The court in which the alderman or earl of the ſhire, together with the biſhop, the ſhiregerieve, and the law-men their aſſeſſors, preſided, was called the *ſhiregemote*. This was a court of great

The ſhire-gemote.

[71] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 47. [72] Id. p. 117.
[73] Id. p. 125.

autho-

authority and importance in the Anglo-Saxon times; a kind of little parliament, in which a great variety of buſineſs, civil, military, and eccleſiaſtical, was tranſacted. One great or general ſhiregemot was held in every county in the ſpring, and another in autumn, at a ſtated time and place, where the biſhop of the dioceſe, the alderman of the ſhire, the ſhiregerieve, law-men, magiſtrates, thanes, abbots, with all the clergy and landholders of the county, were obliged to be preſent. The meeting was opened with a diſcourſe by the biſhop, explaining, out of the ſcriptures and eccleſiaſtical canons, their ſeveral duties, as good Chriſtians and members of the church. After this, the alderman, or one of his aſſeſſors, made a diſcourſe on the laws of the land, and the duties of good ſubjects and good citizens. When theſe preliminaries were over, they proceeded to try and determine, firſt, the cauſes of the church, next the pleas of the crown, and laſt of all the controverſies of private parties[74]. As ſoon as a cauſe was opened, and ſufficiently underſtood, and the evidence produced on both ſides, it was determined by the votes of the whole aſſembly, which were collected by the law-men, who drew up and pronounced the ſentence[75]. If any queſtion of law aroſe, it was anſwered by the law-men out of the dome-boc, or law-book, which always lay before them in

74 Reliquiæ Spelman. p. 54.

75 Hickeſii Diſſertatio epiſt. p. 31, 32.

court.

court [76]. Beſides the trial both of criminal and civil cauſes, a variety of other buſineſs was tranſacted at the ſhiregemots; ſuch as the ſale of lands, donations to the church, the publication and confirmation of teſtaments, &c.[77]

County-courts.

Though the ſhiregemot ſometimes continued ſeveral days, it was impoſſible to finiſh all its buſineſs in the two annual general meetings; and therefore county-courts were held by the ſhiregerieve from four weeks to four weeks, to determine ſuch cauſes as could not be overtaken by the general ſhiregemots. At theſe leſſer county-courts, which are ſometimes called *folckmotes*, none were obliged to attend but the ſhiregerieves, the law-men, the parties and witneſſes in the cauſes to be tried, and ſuch as had immediate buſineſs [78].

Anglo-Saxon chancellor.

Whether there was any ſtated legal magiſtrate below the king, and ſuperior to the aldermen, or earls of counties, in the Anglo-Saxon times, may be juſtly queſtioned. The name of chancellor was not then indeed unknown; but he ſeems to have had little authority or juriſdiction, and to have acted as a kind of private ſecretary to the king; for which reaſon he is ſometimes called the king's ſcribe or notary [79]. This office, however, giving thoſe who were inveſted with it frequent acceſs to the perſons and ſecrets of their royal maſters, procured them no little influence,

[76] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 48. [77] Hickeſii Diſſertatio epiſt. p. 30.
[78] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 50. [79] Ingulf. Hiſt. Croyl.

and

and gradually became more and more important.

Anglo-Saxon cyning or king.

The chief magiſtrate in all the ſtates eſtabliſhed by the Anglo-Saxons in this iſland, was called the *cyning* or *king*; a title of the moſt honourable import in their language, as including the ideas of wiſdom, power, and valour, the moſt neceſſary qualifications of a ſovereign, both in peace and war [80]. It is true, that thoſe chieftains who conducted the ſeveral bands of adventurers out of Germany into Britain, were at their arrival only heretoges; a title which ſignified no more than the leader of an army during an expedition, which conveyed no authority in times of peace, and was commonly of very ſhort duration [81]. But as thoſe armies of adventurers met with a vigorous oppoſition from the native Britons, which continued many years, the authority of their heretoges or leaders laſted long, and by degrees became firm and well eſtabliſhed. This encouraged theſe leaders, with the conſent, and perhaps at the deſire, of their followers, to aſſume the more honourable and permanent title of king; though it is hardly to be imagined, that this new title occaſioned at firſt any very remarkable change in the conſtitution, or brought with it any great acceſſion of authority. It is even probable, that the ſeveral Anglo-Saxon armies beſtowed the title of kings on their reſpective leaders, as much to do honour to themſelves

[80] Somner Diction. Saxon. in voc. [81] Chron. Saxon. p. 13.

as to their leaders. While they were commanded only by heretoges, they were conſidered as a collection of adventurers engaged in a piratical or plundering expedition; but when they had kings at their heads, they appeared in the more reſpectable light of regular ſtates or nations. This account of the origin of kingly government among the Anglo-Saxons in this iſland is very much confirmed by what happened in the north of England, and ſouth of Scotland, in the ſame period. Octa and Ebeſſa conducted a very large colony out of Germany into Britain, A. D. 460, with which they ſettled between the walls of Severus and Antoninus Pius, or the rivers Tyne and Forth. This country being at that time almoſt deſolate, they met with little or no oppoſition; and therefore did not beſtow the title of king on any of their leaders, till near a century after, when they came to be involved in long and bloody wars.

Rules of ſucceſſion, &c. in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

It would be very improper to ſwell this work by entering deep into the political altercations of modern writers concerning—the rules of ſucceſſion to the crown in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms,—the duties, prerogatives, and revenues, of the Anglo-Saxon kings. It is more becoming the dignity of hiſtory, to lay before the reader, in a few words, what appears to be the truth on theſe ſubjects, as far as it can be diſcovered from the genuine monuments of thoſe times.

The crown hereditary, but not ſtrictly.

Each of thoſe brave victorious chieftains who founded a ſtate in this iſland by his conqueſts, was highly honoured by his followers during life; and his valour and victories, to which they owed their eſtabliſhment, were remembered with admiration even after his death. This veneration for the father and founder of their ſtate inſpired them and their poſterity, for a conſiderable time, with great reſpect and affection for his deſcendants, who were conſidered by them as inheriting the virtues of their great anceſtor, and on that account intitled to inherit alſo his wealth and honours. Agreeable to this, we may obſerve, that the ſucceſſion to the crown in all the kingdoms of the heptarchy was at the beginning remarkably clear and regular, the eldeſt ſon ſucceeding his father, without interruption, for ſeveral generations. This is a ſufficient indication, that this moſt natural and obvious rule of ſucceſſion was not unknown to our Saxon anceſtors at their firſt eſtabliſhment in this iſland; and even that it was the rule which they propoſed to follow. It was, however, too perfect to be ſtrictly and invariably obſerved in thoſe rude and unſettled times. By degrees it was violated, and greater and greater breaches made in the ſucceſſion. At firſt it was thought no great ſtretch for the brother of the deceaſed prince, who was of a mature age, and warlike character, to ſupplant his infant-nephew; as fierce unpoliſhed nations could hardly form an idea of being governed by a child, or by

by a regent in his name. This is ſo true, that there is but one example of a minority, and that a ſhort and unfortunate one, in all the hiſtory of the heptarchy [82]. When this breach in the ſucceſſion was become familiar, they proceeded to greater deviations; and ſometimes a prince of the royal family, who was at a great diſtance from the throne, took poſſeſſion of it, to the excluſion of many who were nearer; but ſtill the veneration of the people for the family of the founder of their ſtate was ſo great, that no man who was not of that family dared to caſt an ambitious eye on the crown. At laſt, however, this veneration was ſo much diminiſhed, by length of time, and by the vices, follies, and quarrels, of the ſeveral royal families, that the thrones of all the kingdoms of the heptarchy, that of Weſſex alone excepted, were ſeized by bold uſurpers, who had no connection with the families of their founders; which firſt involved theſe kingdoms in confuſion, and at laſt in ruin. The family of Cerdic, the founder of the Weſt-Saxon kingdom (from whom our preſent moſt gracious ſovereign George III. is deſcended), was more fortunate than any of the other royal families. For though the ſtricteſt rule of ſucceſſion was often violated in this illuſtrious line (ſometimes through neceſſity and for the public good [83]); yet the family was never quite excluded from the

[82] Bed. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 5. c. 24.
[83] W. Malmſ. l. 1, c. 2. Brompt. p. 770. Chron. Saxon. p. 56.

throne, but was at length exalted to the monarchy of England in the perſon of Egbert, the firſt Engliſh monarch.

Hereditary after the eſtabliſhment of the monarchy.

After the eſtabliſhment of the monarchy, the ſtricteſt rule of ſucceſſion again took place, and was for ſome time obſerved; but in leſs than a century, it was again violated by Alfred, the beſt and greateſt of our ancient kings, who was called to the throne by the urgent neceſſities of the times, and the importunate cries of the whole nation, to the excluſion of the infant-ſon of his elder brother. Several ſimilar breaches were afterwards made in the ſucceſſion, to ſay nothing of the violent intruſion of the Daniſh kings, and the uſurpation of Harold. Upon the whole, there is ſufficient evidence, that the crown of England was conſidered as hereditary from the very beginning by the Anglo-Saxons; though the ſtricteſt rule of hereditary ſucceſſion was ſometimes obliged to yield to neceſſity, and ſometimes to violence. In theſe deviations the teſtament of the laſt king was ſometimes of no little weight; and the approbation of the great men in the wittenagemot was always neceſſary to their ſtability.

Rules of ſucceſſion to the crown among the Scots and Welſh.

The ſame obſervations may be applied to the ſucceſſion of the crown among the Scots in this period; though the deviations from the ſtrict rule of hereditary ſucceſſion ſeem to have been rather more frequent among them than among the Engliſh. Kenneth II. who mounted the throne of Scotland A. D. 970, is ſaid to have made

made a law to prevent theſe deviations, and to ſecure the crown to the eldeſt ſon of the laſt king [84]. But if ſuch a law was made, it is evident from the hiſtory of the ſucceeding period, that it had little or no effect. The unhappy cuſtom that prevailed among the Welſh, of dividing the territories of the father among all his ſons, threw every thing with regard to the ſucceſſion of their princes into great confuſion, and was attended with many other fatal conſequences.

Duties of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

The duties of a ſovereign, in the times we are now conſidering, were chiefly two:—To adminiſter juſtice to his ſubjects, with the aſſiſtance of his court or council, in times of peace,—and to command the armies of the ſtate in times of war.

To adminiſter juſtice.

That our Anglo-Saxon kings were conſidered as the chief judges in their reſpective kingdoms, and frequently adminiſtered juſtice in perſon, is undeniable [85]. To this they were bound by their coronation oath; and in this ſome of them ſpent a great proportion of their time. Alfred the Great, in particular, as we are aſſured by Aſſerius, who lived in his court, ſometimes employed both day and night in hearing cauſes that were brought before him by appeals from the ſentences of inferior judges [86]. Theſe ſentences he frequently reverſed, reprimanding the judges

[84] Boet. Hiſt. Scot. l. 2.

[85] Hickeſii Diſſertatio epiſtolaris, p. 115.

[86] Aſſer. Vita Ælfridi, p. 21.

for their ignorance, and commanding them, either to apply to the ſtudy of the laws, or reſign their offices[87]. When their wrong judgments proceeded from malice or corruption, he puniſhed them with great ſeverity, and if we may believe the author quoted below[88], condemned no fewer than forty-two judges in one year to capital puniſhments. To aſſiſt our ancient kings in performing this part of their royal office, they were conſtantly attended by a conſiderable number of the greateſt and wiſeſt men of the kingdom, who acted as aſſeſſors to their ſovereign, and formed a ſupreme court of juſtice, which was called the *king's court* or *council*[89]. To render the attendance of the members of this ſupreme council more eaſy and compatible with the management of their private affairs, Alfred the Great divided them into three equal parts, which ſucceeded each other monthly[90].

This part of the royal office performed by a deputy.

This part of the royal office was found to be very inconvenient after the eſtabliſhment of the monarchy, when appeals to the ſovereign from all parts of England became very frequent, and when few of our kings had ſufficient knowledge and induſtry to perform it in perſon. Several laws were made to prevent unneceſſary appeals to the ſovereign; and a chief juſticiary was appointed to preſide in the king's court, and perform the judicial part of the royal office, when

87 Aſſer. Vita Ælfridi, p. 21. 88 Mirroir de Juſtices, l. 5.
89 See Squire's Inquiry into the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 181.
90 Aſſer. Vita Ælfridi, p. 19, 20.

the

the king was abſent, or otherwiſe employed[91]. It is impoſſible to diſcover the preciſe time when this high office of chief juſticiary was inſtituted; though it is moſt probable, that it was ſome time in the tenth century, when our kings were ſo conſtantly engaged in war againſt the Danes, that they had no leiſure to attend in perſon the adminiſtration of juſtice. At its firſt inſtitution, the perſons inveſted with it ſeem to have been called by different names, expreſſive of their high dignity and great authority, as half-king, alderman of all England, &c. Æthelſtan, a great and powerful thane in the reign of king Athelſtan, was raiſed to this high office (and was perhaps the firſt who enjoyed it), with the title of *half-king;* becauſe he performed that half of the regal office which conſiſted in the adminiſtration of juſtice. His ſon Aylwin ſucceeded him; but contented himſelf with the more modeſt title of alderman of all England[92]. After the inſtitution of this office, which continued for ſeveral centuries to be the higheſt in the ſtate, our kings gradually withdrew from the bench, and left the adminiſtration of juſtice to their high juſticiaries and other judges.

Commanded the army in time of war.

The other part of the regal office, which conſiſted in commanding the armies of the ſtate in perſon in time of war, was long conſidered as indiſpenſable. It was by being brave and ſuc-

[91] Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 77. 250. Spelman Gloſſ. in voce Juſticiarius.

[92] Selden's Tit. Hon. p. 505. Hiſt. Ramſien. c. 3.

ceſsful generals, that the founders of the ſeveral ſtates of the heptarchy had become kings; and it was long believed to be improper, if not impoſſible, for any one to be a king who was not a warrior. Many who by blood were well entitled to reign, were excluded from the throne, becauſe, on account of their age or ſex, they were eſteemed incapable of performing this moſt eſſential part of the regal office. Some of our ancient kings, however, after they were firmly ſeated on the throne, were diſcovered to be of an unwarlike character, and naturally incapable of commanding armies in perſon; and were therefore permitted to perform this part of the regal office alſo by a ſubſtitute, who was called the *cyning's hold*, or *king's lieutenant*, and had the ſame authority over all the other holds or heretoges of the ſeveral counties, that the high juſticiary had over all the other aldermen [93].

Prerogatives of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

Nothing can be more evident than this important truth,—"That our Anglo-Saxon kings "were not abſolute monarchs; but that their "powers and prerogatives were limited by the "laws and cuſtoms of their country." Our Saxon anceſtors had been governed by limited monarchs in their native ſeats on the continent; and there is not the leaſt appearance or probability, that they relinquiſhed their liberties, and ſubmitted to abſolute government in their new ſettlements in this iſland [94]. It is not to be ima-

[93] Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 213. n.

[94] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 7.

gined

gined, that men, whoſe reigning paſſion was the love of liberty, would willingly reſign it; and their new ſovereigns, who had been their fellow-ſoldiers, had certainly no power to compel them to ſuch a reſignation. The power of adminiſtering juſtice to their ſubjects, and of commanding the armies of the ſtate, which have been repreſented above as the moſt important duties of our Anglo-Saxon kings, may be alſo conſidered as their chief prerogatives. Thoſe princes who performed theſe two offices in their own perſons, with great abilities and ſucceſs, had the greateſt influence and authority; while thoſe who wanted either capacity or induſtry for the execution of theſe offices, were much deſpiſed and diſregarded.

Had not power to make laws, or impoſe taxes.

None of our Saxon kings ever ſo much as pretended to the power of making laws, or impoſing taxes, without the advice and conſent of their wittenagemots, or aſſemblies of the great and wiſe men of their reſpective kingdoms. This is evident from the preambles of the ſeveral ſyſtems of Saxon laws which are ſtill extant [95].

Aſſembled the wittenagemots.

It ſeems to have been the prerogative of our Saxon kings to call the wittenagemots, or great councils,—to appoint the times and places of their meeting,—to preſide in them in perſon,—to propoſe the ſubjects of their deliberations,—and to execute their decrees [96].

[95] Vide Wilkins Leges Saxon. paſſim.

[96] Spel. Gloſſ. in voce Gemotum.

Had not the ſole power of peace and war.

When the kingdom was ſuddenly invaded by a foreign enemy, or its internal peace diſturbed by an inſurrection, the king might by his own authority put himſelf at the head of his troops, to repel the invaders, or ſuppreſs the inſurgents: but when a formal war againſt a neighbouring ſtate was intended, more deliberation was required; and it could not be undertaken without the advice and conſent of the wittenagemot [97]. The Anglo-Saxon kings had conſiderable influence in diſpoſing of the conquered lands, and dividing the ſpoils taken from the enemy; but they were obliged to uſe this influence with juſtice and moderation, and could not keep above a third part of theſe lands and ſpoils to themſelves, without incurring the indignation of their troops [98]. King Harold, by retaining a greater proportion than this of the Daniſh and Norwegian ſpoils, occaſioned ſo great a diſguſt and deſertion in his army, that it proved the chief cauſe of his ruin [99]. The conſent of the wittenagemot was commonly obtained to the concluſion of peace, as well as to the declaration of war; becauſe the proſperity and happineſs of the whole kingdom were as much concerned in the one as in the other.

Had the power of military diſcipline.

Among the ancient Germans, the king had no power to inflict any puniſhment upon his ſoldiers for deſertion, or other offences, this being the

97 Cluver. German. Antiq. p. 308.

98 Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 205. Leges Wallicæ, p. 22.

99 W. Malmſ. p. 94. Higden, p. 285.

province

province of their prieſts, who acted by the authority of the god of war, who was ſuppoſed to be preſent in their armies [100]. But after the introduction of Chriſtianity, the exerciſe of military diſcipline became one of the royal prerogatives, as it was never claimed by the Chriſtian clergy [101].

The power of pardoning.

The Anglo-Saxon kings had no power of remitting any mulct or fine impoſed upon any criminal by a court of juſtice, becauſe that would have been depriving another perſon of his right; but they had a power of changing a capital into a pecuniary puniſhment [102].

Could not alienate the crown-lands.

The kings of England, in the period we are now conſidering, were only uſufructuaries of the crown-lands, and could not alienate any of theſe lands, even to the church, without the conſent of the wittenagemot [103].

Nomination of magiſtrates.

It appears to have been one of the royal prerogatives in the times of the heptarchy, and even after the eſtabliſhment of the monarchy, to appoint the aldermen, ſhiregerieves, domeſmen, and other civil and military officers; but this power ſeems to have been afterwards taken from the crown, and veſted in the wittenagemot [104]. But the time and other circumſtances of this change in the conſtitution, are not preſerved in

100 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 7.

101 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 23. 102 Id. p. 36. 201.

103 Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 219. Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 340.

104 Chron. Saxon. p. 49. Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 205.

hiſtory;

hiſtory; and it muſt alſo be acknowledged, that the pretended laws of Edward the Confeſſor, which inform us of it, are of very doubtful authority, and can hardly be depended upon.

Eccleſiaſtical authority of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

The veneration for the clergy, after the introduction of Chriſtianity, was ſo very great, that our kings ſeem to have left to them the government of the church, in a great meaſure, and the choice of perſons to eccleſiaſtical offices, for ſome ages. It is expreſsly declared by the laws of Withred king of Kent, A. D. 694, that the archbiſhop of Canterbury had as good a right to nominate biſhops, abbots, abbeſſes, &c. as the king had to nominate the civil and military officers of the kingdom [105]. This law was adopted and confirmed by Ethelbald king of Mercia, A. D. 742, in a great council of the clergy and nobility, and by his ſucceſſor king Offa, A. D. 785; and ſeems to have been obſerved in all the kingdoms of the heptarchy [106]. By degrees, however, our Anglo-Saxon kings found it neceſſary for the peace and good government of the ſtate, to interfere more directly in eccleſiaſtical elections, and to take care that the dignities of the church ſhould be filled by men of peaceable diſpoſitions, and well affected to their perſons and government. They were ſo ſucceſsful in their endeavours to obtain the direction of eccleſiaſtical elections, that they acquired, firſt the

[105] Chron. Saxon. p. 49. Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 190.
[106] Spel. Concil. t. 1. p. 230. 292.

right

right of approving, and at length of appointing, all the chief dignitaries of the church [107].

As hereditary titles of honour, unconnected with offices, were unknown in the period we are now delineating, our Anglo-Saxon kings could not have the prerogative of granting ſuch titles. Did not beſtow nominal titles.

The authority of regulating the public coin of the kingdom ſeems to have been veſted in the wittenagemot; and the privilege of coining was not only granted to the king, but alſo to the archbiſhops, biſhops, and chief towns [108]. It is unneceſſary to be more particular in pointing out the prerogatives of our Anglo-Saxon kings, as it is ſufficiently evident, from the above account, that they were circumſcribed within very narrow limits, and were hardly ſufficient to ſupport the dignity of the crown, unleſs when it was worn by a perſon of a warlike character and great abilities. Coining money.

The revenues of the Anglo-Saxon kings, eſpecially in the times of the heptarchy, could not be very great, and conſiſted chiefly in the profits ariſing from the crown-lands, and their own patrimonial eſtates. As the Saxons met with a more vigorous reſiſtance in Britain than any of the other northern nations who founded kingdoms on the ruins of the Roman empire in other countries; ſo they treated the native Britons with greater ſeverity. All the other northern con- Revenues of the Anglo-Saxon kings.

107 Spel. Concil. p. 387. Ingulf. Hiſt. Croyl.
108 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 59.

querors

querors contented themſelves with ſeizing two thirds of the conquered country, which they divided among themſelves, leaving the other third in the poſſeſſion of the ancient inhabitants [109]. But the Saxons ſeized the whole country, reducing all the ancient inhabitants who remained in it to a ſtate of ſlavery, without leaving them even the property of their own perſons. This country, with its wretched inhabitants, thoſe greedy unrelenting conquerors divided among themſelves, allotting to each chieftain an extent of territory, and number of ſlaves, proportioned to his dignity and the number of his followers. As theſe chieftains, and their martial followers, had acquired their title to their reſpective proportions of lands, ſlaves, and ſpoils, by the points of their ſwords; ſo they received them in free and full property, without being ſubjected to any payments to their ſovereigns, or other magiſtrates, or even to any ſervices, except thoſe of fighting in defence of their country, and keeping the highways, bridges, and caſtles, in repair.

Crown lands.

This made it neceſſary to aſſign a certain proportion of lands, with their ſlaves, cattle, houſes, &c. in every ſtate, for the ſupport of government, and of the dignity of thoſe who were inveſted with it. In the diviſion, therefore, of the conquered country, the chief commander of each army of adventurers received, in the firſt place,

[109] Lindenbrog. Leg. Antiq. p. 197.

that

that proportion of lands, ſlaves, and ſpoils, that fell to his ſhare as the leader of a particular tribe or family, which he held in free and full property, and might alienate at his pleaſure, as well as any other chieftain. Beſides this, when he was advanced to the throne, he was put in poſſeſſion of thoſe lands, &c. which had been allotted for the ſupport of the royal dignity; but of theſe he was only the uſufructuary, and not the proprietor; they belonged to the crown, and not to the king, who could not alienate them without the conſent of the national aſſembly or wittenagemot. What proportion the crown-lands originally bore to thoſe of the nation in each ſtate, or whether there was any ſuch proportion ſettled or not, we are entirely ignorant; though it is highly probable, on many accounts, that theſe lands were very conſiderable in extent and value. Out of the produce of their crown-lands and family-eſtates, which were cultivated, partly by ſlaves, and partly by ceorls, thoſe ancient monarchs ſupported their families and numerous retainers in rude magnificence and plenty.

Fines and amercements.

As the adminiſtration of juſtice was one of the principal offices and moſt important prerogatives of our Anglo-Saxon kings, ſo it was alſo one of the greateſt ſources of their wealth. By law, a very great proportion (in ſome caſes one half, and in others one third) of all the fines or mulcts impoſed on criminals by the courts

courts of juſtice belonged to the king [110]. This, at a time when almoſt all puniſhments were pecuniary, muſt have amounted to a very conſiderable ſum. We ſhall have occaſion, by and by, to take notice, that our ancient kings derived conſiderable profits both from foreign and domeſtic trade [111].

Danegeld. When the invaſions of the Danes became frequent and formidable, it became a cuſtom ſometimes to bribe them with a ſum of money to deſiſt from their depredations, and leave the country, and at other times to keep a conſiderable body of troops in conſtant pay, to defend the coaſts againſt theſe dangerous enemies. The ordinary revenues of the crown were quite inadequate to the expence of theſe expedients; and therefore it was found neceſſary, with the conſent of the wittenagemot, to impoſe a tax firſt of one Saxon ſhilling, and afterwards of two or more ſhillings, on every hide of land in the kingdom. As there were two hundred and forty-three thouſand ſix hundred hides of land in England, this tax, at one ſhilling on each hide, raiſed twelve thouſand one hundred and eighty Saxon pounds, equal in quantity of ſilver to about thirty-ſix thouſand five hundred and forty pounds ſterling, and in efficacy to more than three hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds of our money at preſent. This tax ſeems to have been firſt impoſed A. D.

[110] Wilkins Leges Saxon. paſſim.

[111] Chap. 6.

991,

991, and was called Danegeld, or the Daniſh tax or payment[112]. It was ſoon after raiſed to two, and at laſt to ſeven ſhillings, on every hide of land, and continued to be levied long after the original occaſion of impoſing it had ceaſed. While the invaſions of the Danes were almoſt annual, our kings derived little profit from this tax, which was all expended in bribing or fighting theſe invaders; but after the acceſſion of the Daniſh princes to the throne of England, it became one of the chief branches of the royal revenue. This tax was raiſed ſo high, and collected with ſo much ſeverity, by king Canute, A. D. 1018, that it amounted to the prodigious ſum of ſeventy-one thouſand Saxon pounds, beſides eleven thouſand of the ſame pounds paid by the city of London[113]. It appears, however, from very good authority, that this was too great a ſum for England to pay in one year at that time. "The tribute (ſays an author of "thoſe times, preſerved by Mr. Leland) that "was paid annually by the Engliſh to the Danes, "was at length raiſed to ſeventy-two thouſand "pounds and more, beſides eleven thouſand paid "by the city of London. Thoſe who had mo-"ney to pay their proportion of this grievous tax, "paid it; but thoſe who had not money, irre-"coverably loſt their lands and poſſeſſions. The "church of Peterborough, and ſeveral other "churches, ſuſtained great loſſes, on that oc-

[112] Chron. Saxon. p. 126.

[113] Id. p. 151.

"caſion."

"caſion [114]." From theſe accounts it is evident, that this tax had been gradually raiſed from one ſhilling to ſeven ſhillings on each hide of land. It was afterwards reduced to four ſhillings on each hide; at which rate it ſeems to have continued till it was finally aboliſhed about ſeventy years after the Norman conqueſt. Houſes in towns were ſubjected to this tax; and a houſe of a certain value paid the ſame with a hide of land [115].

Forfeitures, &c.

Our Anglo-Saxon and Daniſh kings derived conſiderable profits from forfeitures,—from vacant benefices,—from the heriots of their aldermen and thanes, and from ſome other ſources with which we are not particularly acquainted; which enabled them to live with ſufficient ſplendour,—to reward their friends,—to encourage learning,—to relieve the poor,—to build monaſteries, churches, and other edifices, for the benefit and ornament of their country [116].

The wittenagemot.

As the king was the higheſt magiſtrate, ſo the wittenagemot was the higheſt court; in which, with the king at its head, the ſovereignty of the ſtate reſided, in the period we are now examining. In the times of the heptarchy, there were as many wittenagemots as there were kingdoms; which, after the union of theſe kingdoms into one monarchy, were all united into one great aſſembly, or micklemot as it is often called,

114 Leland's Collectanea, v. 1. p. 11.

115 Spelman Gloſſ. in voce Danigeldum. Doomſday-book, apud Gale, t. 1. p. 775.

116 Aſſer. Vita Ælfridi.

In-

In this aſſembly, both eccleſiaſtical and political laws were made; taxes for the maintenance of the clergy, and the ſupport of the civil government, were impoſed; queſtions relating to peace and war were debated; civil and criminal cauſes of the greateſt moment were determined; and the moſt important affairs of the kingdom were finally regulated [117]. All the power and wiſdom of the ſtate were preſumed to be collected in the wittenagemot; which was therefore the guide and guardian of the kingdom, and took cognizance of every thing that affected its ſafety, and proſperity; as the general aſſemblies of the ſeveral ſtates had formerly done in Germany [118]. Its powers.

In that country, all the warriors of every little ſtate, together with the prieſts, who were the only perſons of any conſideration, had a right to be preſent in theſe aſſemblies; and as theſe warriors never engaged in agriculture, trade, or manufactures, but ſpent their time in idleneſs, when they were not employed in ſome military expedition, their attendance on theſe aſſemblies was rather an amuſement than an inconveniency. To ſuch an aſſembly of warriors, the Britiſh ambaſſadors made their application for aſſiſtance; and ſuch, we may believe, were the wittenagemots of the ſeveral little Anglo-Saxon ſtates at their firſt eſtabliſhment in this iſland; conſiſting Its members in the moſt ancient times.

[117] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 11, 12. Tyrrel's Introduction, p. 109, &c.

[118] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 11.

of all the aldermen, heretoges, prieſts, and warriors of the ſtate. In thoſe times, when they were fighting their way, and their arms were hardly ever out of their hands, they attended the general aſſemblies of their nation in arms, as they had formerly done in Germany, ready to proceed upon any martial enterpriſe that might be reſolved upon: but a change of circumſtances naturally and unavoidably occaſioned a change in the conſtitution of theſe aſſemblies, which probably took place by inſenſible degrees, and without any poſitive law.

In later times.

When the conquered lands were divided amongſt all thoſe brave warriors who had contributed to make the conqueſt, many of them who had been common ſoldiers, and conſequently received but a ſmall proportion of land, retired to their little farms, which they began to cultivate. Theſe veterans, now become huſbandmen, alſo farmed ſome parts of the lands of the thanes or heretoges, under whom they had fought; and by degrees formed a new order of men, unknown in ancient Germany, who were called *ceorls*, which have been already deſcribed [119]. Some have imagined, that all theſe ceorls, who were deſcended from the original conquerors, and continued to be proprietors of land, had a title to be members of the wittenagemot; and there is ſufficient evidence, that they were not excluded from it by any poſitive

[119] See p. 324.

law,

law, but only by their poverty and manner of life, which rendered their attendance highly inconvenient, if not impoſſible [120]: for as ſoon as any of theſe ceorls acquired ſuch an eſtate in land as enabled them to live with eaſe and dignity, and attend the public councils of the nation, they were declared by an expreſs law to be thanes and members of the wittenagemot [121].

Qualification.

The qualification in point of eſtate required by that law, was the property of five hides of land; and all the free-born Engliſh who were poſſeſſed of ſuch an eſtate, with a church, a bell-houſe, and manor-place upon it, were conſidered as nobles, and had a title to be members of the wittenagemot. This qualification, it is imagined, was afterwards found to be too ſmall, and was therefore gradually raiſed higher and higher, until, in the reign of Edward the Confeſſor, it was fixed at no leſs than forty hides of land [122].

Other members.

Beſides all the conſiderable proprietors of land who could afford to attend the public councils of the nation, all the archbiſhops, biſhops, abbots, preſbyters, aldermen, heretoges, ſhiregerieves, and domeſmen or judges, were, by virtue of their offices, and on account of their wiſdom and knowledge of the laws, members of this great

120 Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 167, &c.
121 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 70, 71.
122 Hiſtoria Elienſis, c. 40.

aſſembly; which, for this reaſon, was called the *wittenagemot*, or, *aſſembly of the wiſe men* [123].

The ceorls, rather intereſted ſpectators than members.

Though great efforts have been made to prove, that the ceorls, or ſmall proprietors of land, were repreſented in the wittenagemots by their tithing-men, or borſholders, and the inhabitants of trading towns by their aldermen or portreeves, it muſt be confeſſed, that of this there is not ſufficient hiſtorical evidence remaining [124]. It is however highly probable, that many ceorls and burgeſſes, who dwelt at or near the place where a wittenagemot was held, attended it as intereſted ſpectators, and intimated their ſatisfaction with its reſolves, by ſhouts of applauſe, and other marks of approbation. On ſome few great occaſions, when there was an uncommon concourſe of ſuch ſpectators, their preſence and approbation is recorded in ſuch terms as theſe:—"Omnique populo audiente et vidente (and all the people 'hearing and looking on), aliorumque fidelium "infinita multitudo, qui omnes laudaverunt, "(and a prodigious crowd of other people, who "all applauded) [125]." As the real conſtituent members of the Anglo-Saxon wittenagemots were very many, and thoſe who had a kind of right and intereſt to be ſpectators of their deli-

[123] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 14. 72. 76. 79. 102, &c. Spelman. Gloſſ. in voce. Hiſt. Elienſ. c. 10.

[124] Tyrrel's Introduction, p. 95, &c. Squire on the Engliſh Conſtitution, p. 244, &c.

[125] Spelman. Concil. p. 625. 350.

berations

berations were ſtill more numerous, they frequently aſſembled in the open air, in ſome extenſive plain, on the banks of a river, and near a great town, for the benefit of water and proviſions [126].

The king propoſed the matter to be debated.

It was the prerogative of the king to appoint the time and place of the meetings of theſe great aſſemblies, and, with the advice of his council, to prepare and ripen thoſe matters that were to be laid before them for their determination. This negative before debate, which was of great antiquity, being derived from the cuſtoms of the ancient Germans, was attended with the moſt important conſequences, and gave the king and his council a very great influence in the wittenagemots [127]. Such a regulation, however, ſeems to have been neceſſary in ſuch numerous aſſemblies, which were certainly much fitter for determining what was propoſed and explained to them, than for inventing and propoſing.

Stated times of meeting.

In ancient Germany, the general aſſemblies of the ſeveral nations (of which the Anglo-Saxon wittenagemots were the genuine offspring,) met at certain ſtated times, moſt commonly in the ſpring, at the full or change of the moon; and theſe times of meeting were well known to all who were obliged to attend them, who accordingly came to them without any particular ſum-

126 For the names of the places where the wittenagemots met, ſee Hody's Hiſtory of Convocations.

127 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 11.

mons [128]. This cuſtom ſeems to have prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons long after their ſettlement in Britain; and the ſtated times for theſe meetings, as long as they continued Pagans, were no doubt the ſame that had been obſerved by their anceſtors on the continent. But after their converſion to Chriſtianity, the ordinary ſtated meetings of the wittenagemots appear to have been at the three great feſtivals of Chriſtmas, Eaſter, and Whitſuntide, wherever the court happened to be at theſe times. On theſe feſtivals, the Anglo-Saxon kings of England lived in great ſtate, wore their crowns, and were ſurrounded by all the great men of their kingdoms, who were ſumptuouſly entertained by them, and with whom they conſulted about the important affairs of church and ſtate [129].

Extraordinary meetings.

We have good reaſon to believe, that theſe ordinary meetings, on account of their frequency, and other circumſtances, could not be very numerous, and were attended by few beſides thoſe great men who were members of the king's court or council, and were admitted to the royal table; who, we may therefore preſume, acted rather in their miniſterial and judicial, than in their legiſlative capacity, on theſe occaſions. But when any thing was to be done that required the united wiſdom and authority of the whole kingdom, as the making new

[128] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 11.

[129] Spelman. Concil. p. 347. n. Hody's Hiſt. of Convocations, p. 58.

laws,

laws,—impoſing taxes,—declaring war, &c. an extraordinary, or rather a more ſolemn meeting of the wittenagemot, was called, to which all who had a right to be preſent were ſummoned. The laws of king Edmund indeed are ſaid to have been made in a mickle ſynod, or wittenagemot, held at London A. D. 944, on the holy feaſt of Eaſter; but it appears from the preamble to theſe laws, that this was one of thoſe more ſolemn meetings to which all the members had been ſummoned [130]. The wittenagemots mentioned by our hiſtorians ſeem to have been, for the moſt part, of this more ſolemn kind, called for ſome particular and important purpoſe; which is probably the reaſon that ſeveral years ſometimes elapſed between theſe meetings, though there might be many ſuch meetings in thoſe remote ages, of which we have no records [131].

Privileges of the members.

The members of the wittenagemots enjoyed ſeveral privileges, and ſpecial laws were made for ſecuring the liberty and ſafety of their perſons, in going to, attending at, and returning from thoſe aſſemblies; but ſuch of them as were notorious thieves were not entitled to the benefit of thoſe laws [132]. This exception may appear ſurpriſing; but it was not unneceſſary; for in thoſe times, too many, who by their rank and wealth were entitled to be members of the ſu-

130 Spelman. Concil. p. 419.

131 For the dates of the Anglo-Saxon wittenagemots, ſee Fody's Hiſt. of Convocations.

132 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 146.

preme council of the nation, were notorious thieves and robbers; and one of the beſt of our Anglo-Saxon kings loſt his life in extruding one of this character from his own table [133].

General obſervation.

From the foregoing brief delineation of this part of the Anglo-Saxon conſtitution, reſpecting their magiſtrates, and courts of law and juſtice, gradually aſcending from the borſholder to the king, and from the court of the decennary to the wittenagemot, it evidently appears to have been a more regular and ſolid fabric than could have been expected from ſuch unſkilful artiſts. But it was the work of many nations, and of many ages, and aroſe, by ſlow degrees, and various means, to that beauty and firmneſs which we cannot but admire. It would not be impoſſible to trace the progreſs of this political edifice from the firſt rude plan that was formed of it in the wilds of Germany and Scandinavia, to its moſt perfect ſtate: but ſuch a laborious inveſtigation could afford entertainment only to thoſe few who need it leaſt. The changes which have been made in it ſince the Norman conqueſt, will appear in their ſeveral periods in our ſubſequent chapters on government.

Conſtitution of Scotland in this period.

As that part of Scotland which lies to the ſouth of the friths of Forth and Clyde, eſpecially on the eaſtern coaſts, belonged to the kingdom of Bernicia for ſeveral ages, and was chiefly inhabited by Saxons, we may be certain,

[133] W. Malmſ. l. 2. c. 7.

that

that its government was the ſame with that above deſcribed. When this country was finally conquered by, or rather ceded to the Scots, about a century before the Norman conqueſt, it only changed its ſovereign; but neither changed its government nor its inhabitants [134]. Pleaſed with this valuable acquiſition, the kings of Scotland frequently reſided in the low countries, and by degrees became acquainted with the Saxon language, laws, and manners; which they at laſt adopted, and endeavoured to introduce into other parts of their dominions. Theſe, however, made but little progreſs, in this period we are now conſidering, in the northern provinces of Scotland, inhabited by the poſterity of the ancient Caledonians, who ſtill retained their ancient laws and cuſtoms; which have been deſcribed in the firſt volume of this work. The taniſt, or appointed ſucceſſor to the crown, was next in power and dignity to the king; the toſhock was the chief commander of the army; while the tiernas, or chieftains (by our hiſtorians improperly called *thanes*), of the ſeveral tribes, with the aſſiſtance of their brehons, or inferior judges, adminiſtered juſtice in their ſeveral diſtricts [135]. All important affairs of general concern were determined in aſſemblies compoſed of the great men of the nation. But it is unneceſſary to be more

[134] Innes's Eſſays, vol. 2. Append.
[135] Dr. Macpherſon's Diſſertations, Diſſert. 13.

particula

particular in deſcribing the ancient conſtitution of Scotland, before the introduction of the feudal form of government in the reign of Malcolm III. as hardly any authentic memoirs or undoubted veſtiges of that conſtitution are now remaining [136]. It was probably the ſame with that which was eſtabliſhed among the other genuine deſcendants of the ancient Britons in Ireland and Wales.

Of Wales. That deplorable anarchy in which the provincial Britons were involved after the departure of the Romans, made them an eaſy prey to the Scots and Picts, and prevented their making an effectual oppoſition to the Saxons [137]. Even after they had loſt the beſt part of their country, and were confined to the mountains of Wales and Cornwall, their government continued for ſome time very fluctuating and irregular. This is acknowledged by one of their beſt antiquaries; who obſerves, that in the End of the eight century, "there was as yet no ſtayed government "eſtabliſhed in Wales; but ſuch as were chief "lords in any country were called kings [138]." Their animoſity againſt the Saxons was for ſome ages ſo violent, that they would comply with none of their cuſtoms, either in civil or religious matters. But when this animoſity began to wear off, the great imperfection of their own form of government made them ſo ready to adopt the

[136] See Lord Kames's Britiſh Antiquities, eſſay 1.
[137] Gildæ Hiſt. c. 19. [138] Powel's Hiſt. Wales, p. 20.

political

political regulations of their ancient enemies, that before the middle of the tenth century, the conſtitution, magiſtrates, and courts of Wales, were almoſt exactly the ſame with thoſe of England [139]. This is ſo true, that a more minute and particular account of the Anglo-Saxon conſtitution might be extracted from the Welſh laws of Howel Dha, which were collected A. D. 842, than even from the Saxon laws themſelves.

Great officers of the court.

It will at once be a ſufficient proof of this, and a proper concluſion of this ſection, to give a brief account (chiefly taken from theſe laws) of the great officers of the court and houſehold of the kings of Wales, which were the ſame with thoſe of the kings of England, and of all the other ſovereigns of Europe in this period, as to the duties of their reſpective offices, though their emoluments were not ſo great as in more wealthy ſtates.

The great officers in the court of the kings of Wales were twenty-four in number; of which ſixteen belonged to the king, and eight to the queen [140]. Their rank, duties, privileges, and emoluments, were as follows:

Mayor of the palace.

1. The *penteulu*, or mayor of the palace, was the higheſt officer in the court of the kings of Wales, and was always a prince of the royal family. He took place of all the other officers of the houſehold, and had the chief direction of

[139] Vide Præfat. ad leges Howeli Dha.
[140] Leges Wallicæ, p. 8.

every

every thing within the verge of the court. On the three great feſtivals, he had a ſumptuous table in the lower part of the hall where the king dined; and when any perſon had behaved improperly at the royal table in the upper part of the hall, and was extruded from thence, it was the duty of the mayor of the palace to invite the offender to his table, and to intercede with the king in his favour. A ſtrange mixture of rudeneſs and humanity! This great officer was general of the army, and appointed thoſe parties of the king's forces that were ſent out from time to time to plunder the Engliſh borders, and ſometimes commanded them in perſon. His ſalary was no more than three pounds a year; but he had a great variety of valuable perquiſites, beſides ſeveral honourable privileges; one of which was, that in the abſence of the king all the officers of the court were obliged to attend him, as if he had been the king, and the court-muſician to ſing as many ſongs to him as he deſired [141].

The prieſt of the houſe-hold.

2. The *prieſt of the houſehold* was the next in dignity, and always ſat at the royal table, to bleſs the meat, and chant the Lord's prayer. His perquiſites were ſo many, that it was certainly one of the moſt lucrative offices in the court [142].

Steward.

3. The *diſdain* or ſteward of the houſehold was the third in rank. It was the duty of this officer

141 Leges Wallicæ, p. 15—18. Muratori.
142 Leges Wallicæ, p. 18, 19.

to procure all kinds of proviſions for the king's kitchen, and liquors for his cellar, and to command all the ſervants belonging to both,—to aſſign every one of the gueſts his proper place at the royal table,—to ſet one diſh upon it at the head, and another at the foot,—and to taſte all the liquors before they were preſented. The emoluments of this office (beſides an eſtate in land, free from all taxes, annexed to it, as to each of the other offices) conſiſted in a variety of perquiſites, of which the following was one of the moſt remarkable. "As much of every "caſk of plain ale ſhall belong to the ſteward of "the houſehold as he can reach with his middle "finger dipped into it, and as much of every "caſk of ale with ſpiceries as he can reach with "the ſecond joint of his middle finger, and as "much of every caſk of mead as he can reach "with the firſt joint of the ſame finger [143]."

4. The *penhebogydd*, or maſter of the hawks, was the fourth officer in rank and dignity, and ſat in the fourth place from the king at the royal table; but was permitted to drink no more than three times, that he might not be intoxicated, and neglect his birds. He had the care and management of all the king's hawks, and the direction of all the people employed in the royal ſport of hawking. When he had been at any time remarkably ſucceſsful in his ſport, the king was obliged, by law and cuſtom, to pay him the

Maſter of the hawks.

[143] Leges Wall. p. 20—23.

moſt

moſt diſtinguiſhing honours, to riſe up to receive him when he entered the hall, and even, on ſome occaſions, to hold his ſtirrup when he alighted from his horſe. The emoluments of this office were not inconſiderable [144].

Judge of the houſehold.

5. The *judge of the houſehold* poſſeſſed the fifth place of rank and dignity, and had a ſeat at the royal table. The moſt indiſpenſable qualifications of this great officer were theſe two, a learned education, and a long beard. He was ſworn into his office with very great ſolemnity, and inveſted with it, by the king's giving him a cheſs-board of curious workmanſhip, the queen preſenting him with one gold ring, and the poet of the court with another; all of which he was obliged to keep with great care as long as he lived. The judge of the houſehold determined all diſputes that aroſe among the officers and ſervants of the king's houſehold, tried the qualifications of thoſe who were candidates for being judges in the country, and preſided in thoſe famous conteſts of the poets and muſicians that were frequently held before the king; for all which he was entitled to a variety of perquiſites; which made his office as lucrative as it was honourable [145].

Maſter of the horſe.

6. The *penguaſdrawd*, or maſter of the horſe, was the ſixth officer in rank, and the laſt who had a place at the royal table. He had the ſuperintendency of the king's ſtables and horſes, and of all the officers and ſervants employed

144 Leges Wall. p. 20—23.

145 Id. p. 26—31.

about

about them; for which he had many perquiſites[146]. This officer ſeems to have been the ſame with the ſtal-here, or maſter of the ſtables, of our Anglo-Saxon kings[147].

7. The *givas yſdafell*, or chamberlain, was the ſeventh officer in rank; and though he had no place aſſigned him in the great hall, he had the honour to ſleep in the king's chamber, of which he had the care. This officer had the command of all the ſervants employed about the chambers of the king, queen, and royal family. It was his duty to provide clean ſtraw, or ruſhes, for the beds, to ſee them properly made, and fires put on, &c. He was alſo treaſurer of the chamber, and had the keeping of the king's cups, drinking-horns, rings, and other valuable effects, for which he was accountable. Chamberlain.

8. The bard or chief muſician of the court was the eighth in dignity, and had a ſeat next to the mayor of the palace, at his table, in the lower part of the hall. When he was inveſted with his office, the king preſented him with a harp, and the queen with a gold ring; both which he was obliged to keep as long as he lived. It was his duty to ſing and play before the king, 1. the praiſes of God, 2. the praiſes of the king, and, 3. a ſong on ſome other ſubject. He was alſo to ſing and play before the queen, in her own apartment, as often as ſhe required him; but in a low tone, that he might Chief muſician.

[146] Leges Wall. p. 31. [147] Cam. Britan. p. 261.

not

not diſturb the king and his company in the hall. He likewiſe attended the army, and before an engagement ſung and played a particular ſong, called *Unbennuſacht Prydain*, i. e. the Britiſh empire; for which he was rewarded with a ſhare of the booty [148].

Silentiary. 9. The *goſdegwr*, or ſilentiary, poſſeſſed the ninth place. It was the duty of this officer to command ſilence in the hall when the king ſat down to table; after which he took his ſtand near one of the great pillars; and when any improper noiſe aroſe, he immediately quaſhed it, by ſtriking the pillar with his rod. This uſeful officer was not peculiar to the court of Wales, and doth not ſeem to be quite unneceſſary in ſome great aſſemblies even in modern times [149].

Maſter of the huntſmen. 10. The *peneynyd*, or maſter of the huntſmen, was the tenth in rank, and commanded the king's huntſmen, hounds, and dogs of all kinds. From Chriſtmas to the 1ſt of February, he was obliged to attend the court; but at other times his attendance was diſpenſed with, as he was engaged in the purſuit of his game. It was one of the privileges of this officer, that when he appeared in a court of juſtice, he was not obliged to take the uſual oaths, but only to ſwear by his horn, and by his dogs [150].

The mead-maker. 11. The mead-maker was the eleventh, and had, as his name implies, the direction of mak-

[148] Leges Wallicæ, p. 35—37.
[149] Id. p. 38. Du Cange Gloſſ. in voce Silentiarius.
[150] Leges Wallicæ, p. 39.

ing

ing all the mead that was uſed in the king's houſehold [151].

12. The phyſician of the houſehold was the twelfth, and had a ſeat at the table of the mayor of the palace, in the lower part of the hall. He was obliged by his office to cure all the ſlight wounds of the king's officers and ſervants, without any other fee, but ſuch of their garments as were ſtained with blood, or cut with a weapon; but in more dangerous caſes, as fractured ſkulls, or broken legs or arms, he was entitled to a fee of 180 pence, beſides the bloody garments [152]. The phyſician.

13. The *truſſjad*, or butler, was the thirteenth, and had the cuſtody of the king's cellars, and the care of giving out the liquors to all the members of the houſehold, according to certain fixed proportions [153]. Butler.

14. The porter was the fourteenth, and was obliged to know the faces of all men who had a right to be admitted into the king's hall; and was ſeverely fined, if he refuſed any of them admittance. He acted alſo as a gentleman-uſher to the king. Among other perquiſites, the porter was entitled to three horns-full of a certain liquor, which was called *the twelve apoſtles*, at each of the three great feſtivals [154]. Porter.

15. The maſter-cook was the fifteenth, and had the direction of the kitchen, and of the ſervants employed in it. This officer was obliged Maſter-cook.

151 Leges Walliceæ, p. 43.
152 Id. p. 44, 45.
153 Id. p. 45, 46.
154 Id. p. 47, 48.

to ſuperintend the dreſſing of all the diſhes deſigned for the royal table, to taſte them before they were ſerved up, and to ſerve up the laſt with his own hand [155].

Maſter of the lights.

16. The maſter of the lights was the ſixteenth; who had the care of all the wax and tallow candles uſed in the palace, was obliged to hold a taper in his hand near the diſh out of which the king eat, and to carry one before him when he went into his bed-chamber [156].

Officers of the queen's houſehold.

The eight officers of the queen's houſehold were, the ſteward, the prieſt, the maſter of the horſe, the chamberlain, the lady of the bed-chamber, the porter, the cook, and the maſter of the lights, whoſe duties need not be explained.

Fees and immunities of theſe officers.

To each of theſe twenty-four offices a certain eſtate in land was annexed, free from all taxes, in proportion to the dignity and importance of the office; and each of the officers who filled them had a horſe maintained for him in the king's ſtables, a lodging aſſigned him in the palace; and thoſe of them who had not a ſeat at the royal table, or at the table of the maſter of the palace, had either ſeparate tables for themſelves, or an allowance in money. The whole houſehold was new-clothed at each of the three great feſtivals, by the king and queen, the king furniſhing the woollen cloth, and the queen the linen. The lives of the officers of the houſehold were valued at a

[155] Leges Wallicæ, p. 49. [156] Id. p. 50.

much

much higher rate than thoſe of others of the ſame rank;—any injury done to them was very ſeverely puniſhed;—and their daughters were conſidered as good matches, and bore a high price. Theſe advantages, and a great variety of perquiſites, immunities, and diſtinctions, made thoſe offices in the courts of our Anglo-Saxon and Welſh kings very deſirable, and objects of great ambition.

The king's feet-bearer.

Beſides the twenty-four offices above deſcribed, there were eleven others, of conſiderable value, in the courts of theſe ancient princes; the moſt remarkable of which was that of the king's feet-bearer. This was a young gentleman, whoſe duty it was to ſit on the floor, with his back towards the fire, and hold the king's feet in his boſom all the time he ſat at table, to keep them warm and comfortable [157]: a piece of ſtate and luxury unknown in modern times! It is unneceſſary, and would be tedious, to give a particular account of the other ten inferior offices.

[157] Leges Walliæ, p. 58.

SECTION III.

The hiſtory of law in Great Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, *to the landing of William duke of Normandy,* A. D. 1066.

Importance and utility of the hiſtory of law.

THE hiſtory of law, though it hath been much neglected, is certainly one of the moſt curious, uſeful, and intereſting parts of hiſtory [1]. To know the moſt important laws of any nation, in any period, together with the circumſtances in which theſe laws were made, would enable us to form a ſound judgment of the ſtate and character of that nation, and of the wiſdom, juſtice, and propriety of its laws. The want of this hiſtorical knowledge is apt to make us entertain very miſtaken notions both of nations and of their laws. What, for example, can appear more abſurd and barbarous than the following law of Ethelbert, the firſt Chriſtian king of Kent? "If "a freeman lie with a freeman's wife, let him "buy another wife for the injured party [2]." But when we learn from hiſtory, that a certain price was, in thoſe times, ſet upon every woman according to her rank, and that no man could procure a wife without paying her legal price to her parents or guardians, we ſee that this law

[1] See Preface to Lord Kames's Law-tracts.

[2] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 4.

was

was perfectly juſt, and implied no more but that the adulterer ſhould pay, by way of damages, to the injured party, the price which he had paid for his wife, who was now loſt to him, to enable him to purchaſe another wife of the ſame rank.

Origin of written laws among the Anglo-Saxons, &c.

Our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors, at their arrival in Britain, had no written laws, but were governed, as their anceſtors had been for many ages, by certain well-known and eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, which had the force of laws [3]. This was the caſe with all the northern nations who invaded and ſubdued the ſeveral provinces of the Roman empire; they had no written laws when they left their native ſeats, but were governed by cuſtoms exactly ſimilar to thoſe of the Anglo-Saxons. All theſe nations, after they had formed eſtabliſhments in Gaul, Spain, Italy, and Britain, became acquainted with letters, and put their ancient cuſtoms into writing, which were their firſt written laws [4]. This is the true reaſon of the great ſimilarity of the ancient laws of the Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, Wiſigoths, and Anglo-Saxons [5]. All theſe laws were tranſcripts of the ſame original cuſtoms, by which the anceſtors of all theſe nations had been governed in the wilds of Germany and Scandinavia [6].

Different laws in England.

After theſe nations were firmly eſtabliſhed in their new ſettlements, at a great diſtance from each other, their laws began by degrees to be-

3 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 19. 4 Id. c. 21.
5 Vide Lindenbrog. Cod. Leg. Antiq. Wilkins Leges Saxon.
6 Lindenbrog. Prolegomena.

come a little different. But this difference, for ſeveral centuries, conſiſted chiefly in the various rates of thoſe mulcts or fines that were exacted from thoſe who were guilty of certain crimes, according to the greater plenty or ſcarcity of money in their reſpective countries. By the difference of theſe fines, the ſame crime might then have been committed in one country of Europe for half the money that it would have coſt in another. This ſeems to have been the chief, if not the only difference between the three ſyſtems of laws that were eſtabliſhed in England in this period, viz. the Weſt-Saxon law, the Mercian law, and the Dane law. For this at leaſt we have the teſtimony of one of our moſt learned antiquaries; which can hardly be better expreſſed than in his own words: "Our Saxons, "though divided into many kingdoms, yet were "they all one in effect, in manners, laws, and "language: ſo that the breaking of their govern-"ment into many kingdoms, or the re-uniting of "their kingdoms into a monarchy, wrought "little or no change among them, touching "laws. For though we talk of the Weſt-Saxon "law, the Mercian law, and the Dane law, "whereby the weſt parts of England, the middle "parts, and thoſe of Suffolk, Norfolk, and the "north, were ſeverally governed; yet held "they all an uniformity in ſubſtance, differing "rather in their mulcts than in their canon; "that is, in the quantity of fines and amerce-"ments,

"ments, than in the courſe and frame of "juſtice[7]."

Remarkable ſingularity in the juriſprudence of the middle ages.

It will not therefore be neceſſary to take any further notice of this diſtinction in our Anglo-Saxon laws, by which different mulcts were exacted of criminals, and different values were ſet on the lives and limbs of men in the weſt, the middle, and the north parts of England, except it be to acquaint ſuch readers as do not already know it, that ſimilar diſtinctions obtained in the laws of all the other countries of Europe in this period; which occaſioned the following ſingularity in the juriſprudence of the middle ages. When a perſon removed from one kingdom or province into another, he did not change his law, but his life and limbs continued to be valued at the ſame rate they had formerly been; and any injury that was done to him was compenſated according to the laws of his native country, and not according to thoſe of the country in which he reſided[8]. This gave thoſe perſons who removed from a rich country into a poor one, much greater, and thoſe who removed from a poor country into a rich one, much leſs, ſecurity for their lives, limbs, and properties. The noſe of a Spaniard, for example, was perfectly ſafe in England, becauſe it was valued at thirteen marks; but the noſe of an Engliſhman run a great riſk in Spain, becauſe it was valued only at twelve ſhillings. An Engliſhman might

[7] Reliquiæ Spelman. p. 49. [8] Murat. Diſſertazione, t. 1. p. 282.

have broken a Welſhman's head for a mere trifle; but few Welſhmen could afford to return the compliment [9].

The firſt written laws ſhort, &c.

It is not to be imagined, that the firſt written ſyſtems of the ancient laws of the Anglo-Saxons, and other nations, who acquired the dominion of Europe in the fifth and ſixth centuries, were very complete. The uſe of letters, in all theſe nations, was then in its infancy, and very few of the laity in any of them could either read or write. When they began therefore to put their laws in writing, they were frugal of their words, and put down, with great brevity, only ſome of the moſt capital points, leaving many others in their former ſtate; which gave birth to that important diſtinction between the ſtatute or written, and the common or unwritten law, which ſtill ſubſiſts. This too is one of the chief cauſes of the great brevity, obſcurity, and variations, obſervable in the moſt ancient codes of all the preſent nations of Europe; ſome particulars having been made ſtatute law in one country, that were left in the ſtate of common law in another. Whoever, therefore, would give a juſt account of the juriſprudence of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors, muſt be no ſtranger to the cotemporary laws of all the other nations of Europe, which are the beſt commentary on thoſe of England in this period.

[9] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 4, n. and p. 71.

A complete ſyſtem of laws not intended.

None of our readers will expect, or deſire, a complete ſyſtem of the ſtatute and common law of England in the Anglo-Saxon times, with a full illuſtration of each particular, in this place. This is the province of the lawyer rather than of the hiſtorian, who muſt content himſelf with giving a view of the general ſpirit, and moſt important particulars, of the laws of his country in every period. For his further ſatisfaction, the reader will find in the Appendix, a tranſlation of the laws of ſome of the beſt of our Anglo-Saxon kings [10].

Matrimonial laws.

The laws of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors, and of all the northern nations, relating to the matrimonial union of the ſexes, were, in ſome reſpects, curious, and merit our attention. Theſe laws are always of great importance to ſociety; being very pernicious when they are imprudent or unnatural, and very beneficial when they are agreeable to nature and good policy. The great fundamental law, ſo clearly pointed out by nature, of the union of one man and one woman, was firmly eſtabliſhed among all theſe nations in very ancient times; but the manner of forming this union, and the rights of the contracting parties, were a little ſingular. Though all theſe nations treated the ſex with the moſt reſpectful attention, yet they conſidered every woman as under the protection or guardianſhip of ſome man or other during her whole life; without

[10] See Append. N° 3.

whoſe

whoſe conſent ſhe could not execute any legal deed [11]. Whether this was a proper teſtimony of their regard for the weaker ſex may be juſtly queſtioned; but the fact is undeniable. This protection or guardianſhip, was called, in the Saxon language, *mund*; and the perſon who had a right to it, *mundbora*, who could not be deprived of this right without his own conſent, obtained by a proper conſideration [12]. The father was the natural and legal guardian of his unmarried daughters;—the brothers, after the father's death, of their unmarried ſiſters;—the neareſt male relation of thoſe who had neither fathers nor brothers;—the male heir of the huſband was the guardian of the widow;—and the king was the legal guardian and protector of all thoſe women who had no other [13]. When a young man therefore propoſed to make his addreſſes to a lady, one of the firſt ſteps he took, was to procure the conſent of her mundbora or guardian, by making him ſome preſent ſuitable to his rank and that of the lady. This preſent was called the *mede* or *price*, and in the barbarous Latin of the middle ages, *metha* or *methum*; which gave occaſion to its being ſaid, that in thoſe times men bought their wives [14]. If any man was ſo raſh as to marry a woman without the conſent of her guardian, he not only incurred the ſevere penalties inflicted on thoſe who were guilty

[11] Muratori Antiq. t. 2. p. 113. Stiernhook de Jure Sueon. p. 153.
[12] Spelman. Gloſſ. p. 423. [13] Muratori Antiq. t. 2. p. 113, 114.
[14] Id. ibid. Du Cange Gloſſ. in voce,

of

of the crime of mundbreach, as it was called, but he obtained no legal authority over his wife, or any of her goods, by ſuch a marriage; that authority ſtill remaining in the guardian, who could not be diveſted of it without his own conſent. Nay, ſo far was this idea carried, that if a woman who had been married without the conſent of her guardian, was debauched, the damages recovered were not paid to her huſband but to her guardian. To reſtrain avaricious guardians from demanding, and amorous youths from offering too great preſents, for obtaining their conſent, laws were made to limit the utmoſt extent of them for people of all ranks [15]. When a man made his addreſſes to a widow, he was obliged to pay no more than one half of the limited price for the conſent of her guardian, as a widow was eſtimated at no more than half the value of a maiden of the ſame rank [16]. As ſoon as the lover had obtained the conſent of his miſtreſs, and of her guardian, the parties were ſolemnly contracted, and one of the bridegroom's friends became ſurety to the woman's guardian, that ſhe ſhould be treated well, and maintained in a manner ſuitable to her ſtation [17]. In this contract, the dowry which the huſband ſettled upon his wife was fixed and aſcertained; of which ſhe was to enjoy the uſufruct, and, in ſome caſes, the property, if ſhe proved the ſurvivor. With

[15] Muratori Antiq. t. 2. p. 113, 114. Leges Wallicæ, p. 35.
[16] Leg. Longobard. l. 2. tit. 8. § 8.
[17] Spelman. Concil. p. 425.

reſpect

reſpect to the proportion of this dowry, the laws of the Anglo-Saxons were more favourable to the ſex than thoſe of any other of the northern nations[18]. It was a cuſtom as inviolably obſerved as the moſt poſitive law, that all the friends and relations of both parties, within the third degree, were invited to the marriage-feaſt, and that all who were invited made a preſent of ſome kind or other to the bride and bridegroom[19]. The father, brother, or guardian of the bride, in particular, made a conſiderable preſent in furniture, arms, cattle, and money, according to the circumſtances of the family; which was called *faderfium (father-gift)*, and was all the fortune the huſband received with his wife[20]. No marriage could be lawfully celebrated without the preſence of the woman's guardian, who ſolemnized the marriage, by delivering the bride to the bridegroom with words to this purpoſe: "I give thee my daughter (ſiſter, or relation) "to be thy honour and thy wife, to keep thy "keys, and to ſhare with thee in thy bed and "goods. In the name of the Father, Son, and "Holy Ghoſt." After which, the prieſt pronounced the nuptial benediction[21]. Though the bridegroom had already been at much expence in procuring the conſent of the guardian, and ſettling a dowry on his wife, he was obliged,

18 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 18. Heineccii Op. t. 6. p. 113. Spel. Concil. p. 435. Stiernhook, p. 155. 19 Id. ibid.
20 Heinec. t. 6. p. 117. Lindenbrog. Gloſſ. in voce. Spel. Gloſſ. in voce. 21 Stiernhook, p. 160.

both

both by law and cuſtom, to make her a valuable preſent on the firſt morning of their marriage, before he aroſe from bed, as a teſtimony of his entire ſatisfaction. This, which was called the *morgængifc*, or *mbrning-gift*, was the pin-money of antiquity, and became the ſeparate property of the wife, with which the huſband had no concern [22]. It was found by experience, that ſome ladies, by their ſuperior charms, or ſuperior art, prevailed upon their huſbands, in theſe critical circumſtances, to make very extravagant morning-gifts; which produced poſitive laws in almoſt every country of Europe, reſtraining them within certain limits, in proportion to his eſtate [23]. Such were the matrimonial laws and cuſtoms of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors; of which one great object ſeems to have been, to prevent unequal and clandeſtine marriages. They were evidently very favourable to the fair ſex, and to thoſe families who had many daughters; but whether any of them might be revived with advantage, it belongs not to a private perſon to determine.

Concerning divorces.

When the matrimonial knot was once duly tied, among the ancient Germans, and the ſeveral nations deſcended from them, nothing but the death of one of the parties, or the infidelity of the wife to the marriage-bed, could diſſolve it [24]. After theſe nations had embraced the Chriſtian religion, they were ſtill further con-

[22] Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 147. Leges Wallicæ, p. 80. et in Gloſſ. voce Cowyll. [23] Muratori, t. 2. p. 115.
[24] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 19, 20.

firmed

firmed in theſe ſentiments; and the ties of marriage were eſteemed very ſacred and inviolable[25]. It cannot, however, be denied, that voluntary ſeparations, and even divorces, became gradually too frequent, eſpecially amongſt the great; and that the monkiſh doctrines concerning the great merit of vows of chaſtity made by married perſons, contributed not a little to this abuſe. By the canon law, if either the huſband or wife made a vow of chaſtity, the other party could not prevent a ſeparation; and, which was ſtill more unreaſonable, could not marry another[26]. The laws of Wales permitted a man to repudiate his wife not only for adultery, but for ſuch indecent behaviour as indicated a diſpoſition to commit that crime; and the ſame laws allowed a woman to ſeparate from her huſband, without forfeiting her dowry, for ſo ſlight a cauſe as an unſavoury breath[27].

Authority of huſbands.

The huſband, who had regularly purchaſed the guardianſhip of his wife from her former guardian, ſucceeded to all his rights, became her lord and protector, the adminiſtrator of her goods, and the guardian of all the children of the marriage[28]. But though the authority of huſbands, among all the northern nations who bought their wives, was very great; yet they ſeem to have exerciſed it with greater lenity than the Gauls, and other nations, who had not that

[25] Spelman. Concil. p. 41. 52. 153.
[26] Id. p. 269.
[27] Leges Wallicæ, p. 80. 298.
[28] Heinec. t. 6. p. 137.

cuſtom;

cuſtom; and for this very reaſon perhaps, that their wives had coſt them money, and were conſidered as valuable poſſeſſions. By the laws of Wales (which were probably copied in this particular, as in many others, from thoſe of their neighbours the Engliſh) a huſband was allowed to give his wife three blows with a ſtick on any part of the body except the head, if he catched her in bed with another man—if ſhe ſquandered away his goods—if ſhe pulled him by the beard—or if ſhe gave him opprobrious names; but if he beat her either more ſeverely, or for more trifling cauſes, he was fined [29].

Paternal authority.

The paternal authority among the ancient Germans, and the nations deſcended from them, did not extend to the power of life and death, as amongſt the Gauls; but parents, in all theſe nations, had a right to correct their children with becoming ſeverity, to regulate their conduct, to ſell their daughters to huſbands with their own conſent, and even to ſell both their ſons and daughters into ſlavery, to relieve themſelves from extreme neceſſity [30]. In every clan or tribe of the Welſh in this period, there was one perſon who was ſtyled the *pencenedl*, or *head of the tribe*, who had conſiderable authority over all the families in it, who tranſacted nothing of importance without his knowledge and conſent [31]. This officer, who was choſen by all the heads of fa-

[29] Leges Wallicæ, p. 387.
[30] Cæſar de Bell. Gal. l. 6. c. 19. Heinec. t. 6. p. 62.
[31] Leges Wallicæ, p. 164.

milies,

milies, was conſidered as the common parent of the whole tribe, the ſupreme judge in all genealogical queſtions about the admiſſion of perſons into the clanſhip, and was intitled to a preſent from every man who married any woman under his protection [32].

Laws relating to compacts, &c.

The laws of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors, for the regulation of bargains, compacts, and agreements of various kinds;—for the ſecurity of real and perſonal eſtates—for the recovery of juſt debts—for eſtabliſhing mutual confidence and good faith among the members of ſociety—and for pointing out the legal methods of obtaining juſtice in all theſe particulars, are too numerous to be here inſerted, and would form a body of law rather than an article of hiſtory [33]. Before the uſe of writing became common, all conſiderable bargains, compacts, and agreements of every kind, were tranſacted in the preſence of ſome magiſtrate, or in the hundred or county court; that if any diſpute aroſe concerning them, the moſt unexceptionable witneſſes might not be wanting [34]. Still further, to prevent miſtakes about the terms and conditions of theſe tranſactions, they were ſometimes written in the blank leaves of ſome church-bible, which was conſidered as an authentic record [35]. The laws againſt inſolvent debtors were very ſevere; and

[32] Leges Wallicæ, p. 164. 184.

[33] Vide Wilkins Leges Saxon. paſſim, et Leges Wallicæ.

[34] Hickeſii Diſſertatio Epiſtolaris, p. 30. [35] Id. p. 22, 23.

their

their creditors were permitted not only to ſtrip them of every thing, and to impriſon their perſons, but even to reduce them to ſlavery [36]. To inſpire men with a regard to character in their dealings, notorious rogues and cheats were laid under many inconveniences. They were not admitted into any decennary, nor ſuffered to bear teſtimony in any court of juſtice; and if they became very infamous, they had their noſes cut off, or their heads ſcalped, that all men might know and avoid them [37].

Laws of ſucceſſion.

The laws of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors not only provided for the ſecurity of men's properties during life, but alſo directed and regulated the ſucceſſion to them, and that in a manner very agreeable to the natural wiſhes and deſires of mankind. When a father died and left children, they were his heirs, as being deareſt unto him, and moſt dependent upon him [38]. If theſe children were all ſons, there can be no doubt that the poſſeſſions of their common parent were equally, or almoſt equally, divided amongſt them; or if they were all daughters, the diviſion was alſo equal: but when ſome of them were ſons, and others daughters, it is not certainly known, whether the daughters ſhared equally with the ſons or not, in the moſt ancient times. By the laws of the Saxons on the continent, daughters did not ſhare equally with the ſons;

36 Heinec. t. 6. p. 15. 37 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 103. 137, 138.
38 Tacit. de moribus Germ. c. 20.

and this, it is probable, was alſo the law of thoſe who ſettled in this iſland [39]; though there is a law of king Canute which ſeems to make no diſtinction between ſons and daughters [40]. By the laws of Wales in the tenth century, a daughter received only half the proportion which a ſon inherited of their father's poſſeſſions [41]. When a man at his death had no children, his neareſt relations were his heirs; which are thus diſcribed: "If any one die without children, if his father "and mother be alive, they ſhall be his heirs; "if his father and mother are dead, his brothers "and ſiſters ſhall be his heirs; but if he hath no "brothers or ſiſters, the brothers and ſiſters of "his father and mother ſhall be his heirs, and "ſo on to the fifth degree, according to proxi-"mity of blood [42]." When none appeared to claim a ſucceſſion, or when they could not make good their claim, the whole fell to the king. Such were the laws of ſucceſſion among our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors; different in ſeveral reſpects from thoſe which are obſerved at preſent, and which were introduced, with many other feudal cuſtoms, after the Norman conqueſt.

Laws relating to teſtaments.

Though the above rules of ſucceſſion ſeem to have been agreeable to the moſt natural feelings of the human heart, yet it might often happen, that perſons who had no children, or very near

39 Lindenbrog. p. 476. 40 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 144.
41 Leges Walliæ, p. 88.
42 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 20. Lindenbrog. p. 460. Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 267.

relations,

relations, might wiſh to diſpoſe of their poſſeſſions to others than thoſe that were pointed out by law. But this the ancient Germans could not do, becauſe they were ſtrangers to the uſe of laſt-wills or teſtaments, as the Anglo-Saxons probably were at their firſt ſettlement in this iſland [43]. Thoſe German and Northern nations, however, who abandoned their native ſeats, and erected kingdoms in Italy, France, Spain, and Britain, ſoon became acquainted with, and adopted this method of conveying their eſtates, which they found practiſed by the Romans, and other inhabitants of theſe countries. After the converſion of theſe nations to Chriſtianity, they were inſtructed and encouraged in this mode of eluding the ſtrict laws of ſucceſſion, and conveying their eſtates by will, for very obvious reaſons. Accordingly we may obſerve, that the moſt ancient Anglo-Saxon teſtaments that have been preſerved and publiſhed, are agreeable to the Roman forms, and contain very valuable legacies to the church, for the benefit of the ſouls of the teſtators, and of their anceſtors [44]. The method of diſpoſing of their poſſeſſions by will, agreeable to their inclinations, and for the good of their ſouls, which was firſt adopted by kings and great men, ſoon became ſo common, and ſo fatal to the intereſts of legal heirs, that it was found neceſſary to lay it under ſome reſtraints by poſi-

43 Tacit. de morib. German. c. 20.

44 Hickeſii Diſſertatio Epiſtolaris, p. 50—63.

tive laws. By a law of Alfred the Great, all perſons were reſtrained from alienating from their natural and legal heirs, eſtates which had deſcended to them from their anceſtors, if the firſt purchaſers had directed, either in writing, or before credible witneſſes, that theſe eſtates ſhould remain in the family, and deſcend to their poſterity; which ſufficiently proves, that entails are very far from being novelties in the laws of England[45]. A man who had children was prohibited, by the laws of Wales, from leaving any legacies from his children, except a mortuary to the church, or a ſum of money for the payment of his debts[46]. But as the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the people, the influence and avarice of the clergy, increaſed, entails, and all other legal reſtraints, which had been contrived to prevent men from ruining their families to enrich the church, were removed, and every man was encouraged to leave as much to the church as poſſible. "The thirteenth cauſe (ſays Muratori) "of the great riches of the church, was the pious "manners of thoſe ancient times, when fathers "and councils earneſtly exhorted all Chriſtians "to give, or at leaſt to leave, by their teſta-"ments, a great proportion of their eſtates for "the redemption of their ſouls; and thoſe good "men who complied with theſe exhortations, "were ſaid to have made Chriſt one of their "heirs. By degrees, there was hardly any man

45 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 43.

46 Leges Wallicæ, p. 76.

"died,

"died, without leaving a conſiderable legacy to "the church; and if any perſon neglected to "make a will, and do this, he was eſteemed an "impious wretch, who had no concern for the "ſalvation of his ſoul, and his memory was in-"famous. To wipe off this infamy, it inſen-"ſibly became a cuſtom for the biſhop to make "wills for all who died inteſtate in his dioceſe, "and to leave as much to the church as the "perſons themſelves ſhould have done, if they "had made wills. This good office (as I "imagine) was at firſt done with the conſent, "and perhaps at the requeſt of the heirs of "the deceaſed; but in proceſs of time it be-"came an eſtabliſhed cuſtom, and acquired the "force of a law, particularly in England [47]." Is it poſſible, that preſumption on the one hand, and ſimplicity on the other, could be carried to a greater height?

Penal laws.

No laws, however juſt and prudent, have ever been found ſufficient, in any country, to ſecure the peace and good order of ſociety, and protect the properties, characters, and perſons of men, from all injuries, merely by the force of their internal rectitude. Nor was there ever any nation in the world that could afford to beſtow particular premiums upon all who obeyed its laws, in order to engage them to obedience by the hopes of theſe rewards. It became univerſally neceſſary, therefore, to enforce obedience, by

47 Murator. Antiq. t. 5. p. 654.

the fear of puniſhments in caſe of diſobedience; which gave riſe in all parts of the world to thoſe laws which are called criminal or penal laws, becauſe they forbid crimes, and threaten penalties. The penal laws of our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors were in ſeveral reſpects curious, and merit a ſhort attention.

The ſpirit of the Anglo-Saxon penal laws was to repair the injury.

In general, we may obſerve, that after the Anglo-Saxons embraced the Chriſtian religion, they were ſubjected to double penalties for all their crimes; one of which was inflicted by the canons of the church, and the other by the laws of the ſtate. Thus, for example, a perſon convicted of wilful murder was obliged, by the canons of the church, to live ſeven years on bread and water, as well as to pay all the penalties which the laws of the land required. But as the cenſures of the church are not ſo properly the ſubject of the preſent enquiry, it may be ſufficient to refer the reader for an account of them to the books quoted below[48]. It may be further obſerved, that as the great object of the Anglo-Saxon penal laws was to repair and make amends for injuries, rather than to puniſh crimes, they made little difference between injuries done through deliberate malice, and thoſe done in a ſudden tranſport of paſſion, or even by mere accident. It was a maxim in their law, as well as a proverb in common converſation, "Unwil-

[48] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 89—93. Spelman Concil. p. 460—468. Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 963.

"lingly

"lingly offend, willingly amend[49]." This diſtinction, however, was too obvious and important to be quite diſregarded; and therefore Canute the Great commands, in one of his laws, that ſome little difference ſhould be made between a wilful and an accidental offender[50]. From the ſame principle, capital puniſhments were very rare amongſt the Anglo-Saxons; becauſe a man's death could not repair the injuries which he had done by his crimes. Our more particular obſervations on the penal laws of this period muſt be chiefly confined to thoſe which were deſigned to repair the injuries which men ſuſtained in their properties by theft and robbery, in their characters by calumny, and in their perſons by maiming and murder. The injury done indeed, by this laſt crime, was irreparable to the perſon injured; and therefore the reparation was made to the king for the loſs of his ſubject, and to the family for the loſs of their friend.

Laws againſt theft.

Theft was one of the moſt common crimes in the period we are now conſidering; and therefore a great number of laws were made againſt thoſe who were guilty of it. In the early part of this period, theft of the worſt kind, even when it was committed in a church, in the king's palace, or a biſhop's houſe, did not expoſe the thief to any corporal puniſhment. But even then the compenſation he was obliged by law to

[49] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 277. 279.

[50] Id. p. 142.

make rendered ſtealing a very loſing trade when it was detected. By the laws of Ethelbert, the firſt Chriſtian king of Kent, if a thief ſtole from a church, he was obliged to reſtore twelve-fold; from a biſhop, eleven-fold; from the king, or from a prieſt, nine-fold; from a deacon, ſix-fold; and from other clerks, three-fold [51]. Where, by the bye, we may obſerve how ſoon the goods of the church and of the biſhop began to be eſteemed more inviolable than thoſe of the king. By degrees it was found neceſſary to make more ſevere laws againſt this crime, which continued to increaſe. By a law of Withred king of Kent, who flouriſhed about a century after Elthelred, a thief who was catched in the act of ſtealing, might be killed with impunity, if he attempted either to fly, or to make reſiſtance [52]. Ina king of Weſſex, who was cotemporary with Withred, proceeded a ſtep further, and declared theft a capital crime; but allowed the thief, or his friends, to redeem his life, by paying his *were*, or the price at which his life was valued by the law, according to his rank in ſociety [53]. This ſeems to have continued to be the general principle of the Anglo-Saxon laws, with regard to thoſe who were convicted of having ſtolen any thing of conſiderable value. This value was fixed by the laws of king Athelſtan, A,D. 926, at eight pence, equal in ef-

[51] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 1, 2. See Append. N° 3.
[52] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 12. [53] Id. p. 17.

ficacy

ficacy to fifty ſhillings of our money at preſent; and it was not long after raiſed to twelve pence [54]. The ſame king alſo raiſed the age at which a perſon might be condemned for theft, from twelve to fifteen years [55]. All who had been once convicted of theft, and had paid their *were*, or price of their life, were obliged to find ſureties for their good behaviour, or to ſwear, as the biſhop directed them, that they would ſteal no more; and if, after this, they were convicted of the ſame crime, they were to be hanged [56]. The accomplices and protectors of thieves, and thoſe who received and concealed ſtolen goods, knowing them to be ſtolen, were ſubjected to the ſame penalties with the thieves themſelves. The laws of Wales in this period againſt theft, and indeed the laws of all the other nations of Europe, ſeem to have been nearly the ſame with thoſe of England [57]. The diſtinction between the puniſhing of theft as a crime, and exacting compenſation for it as an injury, which was the chief object of the penal laws of this period, is ſtrongly marked in the following law of Howel Dha: "If a thief is condemned to death, he "ſhall not ſuffer in his goods; for it is quite "unreaſonable both to exact compenſation, and "inflict puniſhment [58]." But theft was at length made a capital crime, without benefit of com-

[54] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 56. 65. [55] Id. p. 70.
[56] Id. ibid.
[57] Vide Leges Walliciæ, l. 3. c. 3. Heinec. t. 6. p. 442. 460.
[58] Leges Walliciæ, p. 221.

penſation,

penſation, about forty years after the Norman conqueſt [59].

Laws againſt robbery.

Robbery, when it was committed by a troop of armed men, without the territories of the ſtate to which they belonged, was ſo far from being condemned as a crime, that it was commended as a brave and patriotic action, by the ancient Germans, and the nations deſcended from them [60]. All the laws of our Anglo-Saxon kings, in the times of the heptarchy, againſt robbery, were made with this reſtriction:—"Pro-"vided it was committed within the bounds of "our kingdom [61]." In the laws of Wales, there are many regulations for dividing the booty brought home by thoſe bands of robbers that went out from time to time to plunder the territories of the neighbouring ſtates; and of this booty the king, queen, and great officers of the court, had a conſiderable ſhare [62]. But though all thoſe nations, to enrich themſelves at the expence of their neighbours, and to keep their youth in the exerciſe of arms, encouraged external depredations, they diſcouraged internal robbery. By the laws of Ina king of Weſſex, A. D. 693, a robber within the kingdom was condemned to reſtore what he had taken, and to pay a fine of ſixty ſhillings; but if he was the leader of a gang of robbers above thirty-five in

[59] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 304.
[60] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 14.
[61] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 16.
[62] Leges Wallicæ, p. 17.

number,

number, he was to pay the full price of his life, or his full *were*. By the laws of the ſame prince, a robber who broke into the king's or biſhop's houſe, was to make ſatisfaction with one hundred and twenty ſhillings; into an alderman's, with eighty ſhillings; into a thane's, with ſixty ſhillings; and into the houſe of an inferior land-owner, with thirty-five ſhillings[63]. Theſe were certainly very moderate puniſhments for ſuch audacious criminals; and yet this ſeems to have been the law during the whole of this period, except that the mulcts were raiſed a little higher by Canute the Great, in the beginning of the eleventh century[64]. It is expreſsly declared in the ancient laws of Wales, that robbery ſhall never be puniſhed with death; "becauſe (ſay "theſe laws) it is a ſufficient ſatisfaction for "this crime, if the goods taken be reſtored, "and a fine paid to the perſon from whom they "were taken, according to his ſtation, for the "violence offered him, and another to the king "for the breach of the peace[65]." The extraordinary lenity of all thoſe laws, is a further proof, that compenſation, and not puniſhment, was their chief object. This is ſtill more conſpicuous in the laws againſt incendiaries, which obliged the unhappy man who had his houſe burnt by accident to pay all the damages done by the fire to the neighbouring houſes, as much as if he had been a voluntary malicious incendiary:

63 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 16. 23. 64 Id. p. 143.
65 Leges Walliciæ, p. 230.

diary[66]: a moſt extravagant and unreaſonable law! which ſhews how careful legiſlators ought to be, what general principles they adopt, and that they do not purſue them too far.

Laws againſt calumny.

A good name was never more uſeful and neceſſary than in the period we are now delineating; becauſe, without that, no man could be admitted a member of any tithing or decennary, but was reputed a vagabond. It was probably for this reaſon that a calumniator was more ſeverely puniſhed by the laws of the Anglo-Saxons than a robber. By a law of Lotherc, who was king of Kent towards the end of the ſeventh century, a calumniator was obliged to pay one ſhilling to the perſon in whoſe houſe or lands he uttered the calumny, ſix ſhillings to the perſon he calumniated, and twelve ſhillings to the king[67]. But Edgar the Peaceable, who flouriſhed about two centuries after, made a much more ſevere law againſt this crime; by which it was decreed, that a perſon convicted of groſs and dangerous defamation ſhould have his tongue cut out, unleſs he redeemed it, by paying his full *were*, or the price of his life; and this law was confirmed by Canute the Great[68].

Laws for the preſervation of the peace.

To guard againſt perſonal injuries, to which a fierce and warlike people are exceeding prompt, many laws were made by the Anglo-Saxons for the preſervation of the public peace, and the

66 Leges Wallicæ, p. 228.
67 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 9.
68 Id. p. 9. 78. 136.

preven-

prevention of affrays and quarrels, in which men might be in danger of being killed or wounded. By a law of king Ina, it was declared, that whoever broke the peace in the king's court, or in a biſhop's houſe, ſhould pay a mulct of one hundred and twenty ſhillings; in an alderman's houſe, eighty ſhillings; in a thane's houſe, ſixty ſhillings; in the houſe of an inferior landholder, thirty ſhillings[69]. The penalty againſt this offence was very much raiſed by a law of Alfred the Great; which declared, that if any man fought, or even drew his ſword, within the verge of the king's court, his life ſhould be at the king's mercy; and if his life was ſpared, that he ſhould pay his full *were*[70]. The verge of the court extended three miles and a half every way from the houſe in which the king lodged[71]. The penalties for the breach of the peace in cathedral churches were the ſame as in the king's court, viz. the loſs of life, or the payment of a full *were*; in middling churches, a mulct of one hundred and twenty ſhillings; in ſmaller churches that have a burying-place, of ſixty ſhillings; in very ſmall churches that have no burying-place, of thirty ſhillings[72]. Several laws were alſo made, with pretty ſevere penalties, againſt fighting and quarrelling in alehouſes[73].

69 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 22.
70 Id. p. 36.
71 Id. p. 63.
72 Id. p. 126.
73 Id. p. 9.

If

Laws for the protection of criminals from ſudden violence.

If a fierce unpoliſhed people are too apt to offer perſonal injuries, they are ſtill more apt to reſent and revenge them with inſtantaneous and exceſſive violence. This made it neceſſary for the moſt ancient legiſlators of almoſt all nations to provide for the perſonal ſafety of criminals, and preſerve them from the immediate revenge and fury of thoſe whom they had offended. One means employed for this purpoſe by many nations, and particularly by our Anglo-Saxon anceſtors, was the appointing certain places to be ſanctuaries to all who took refuge in them; and giving authority to certain perſons of the higheſt rank and greateſt power, to defend all perſons who put themſelves under their protection from immediate violence. The king's court, and all churches, were declared ſanctuaries by the Anglo-Saxon laws; and criminals who fled to them were protected from violence for a certain time, that they might have an opportunity of making ſatisfaction for the injuries which they had done, and of compromiſing matters with thoſe whom they had offended [74]. By the ſame laws, kings and biſhops had authority to defend thoſe criminals who put themſelves under their protection, for nine days; and abbots and aldermen for three days; but if they did not make ſatisfaction within that time, they were then to be brought to juſtice, and puniſhed according to law [75].

74 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 15. 35. 43.

75 Id. p. 63.

But

But as all the laws that were made for preventing perſonal injuries were often ineffectual, it was neceſſary to make other laws, for regulating the puniſhment to be inflicted upon, or rather the ſatisfaction to be made by, thoſe who were guilty of theſe injuries. Thoſe laws were very numerous; but it will be ſufficient to take notice only of a few of thoſe which regulated the ſatisfaction to be made for the three great injuries,—of wounding,—of killing,—and of violating the chaſtity of the fair ſex. Puniſhments of perſonal injuries.

By the laws of the Anglo-Saxons, and of all the other nations of Europe, in the middle ages, certain prices were ſet upon all the members of the human body, and upon bruiſes, maims, and wounds, in every part of it, according to their breadth, length, and depth, with a degree of accuracy and minuteneſs that is truly ſurpriſing. Theſe prices of the ſeveral parts of the body, and of their wounds, maims, and bruiſes, were formed into a kind of book of rates, which every judge was obliged to get by heart before he could be admitted to ſit in judgment [76]. When any perſon was convicted of having wounded another, the judge declared out of the doom-book, the price of a wound of ſuch dimenſions, in ſuch a part of the body; and this the criminal was obliged to pay to the perſon wounded; and by a law of king Edmund it was declared, that no abatement could be Wounding.

[76] Leges Wallicæ, p. 186. Leges Saxon. edit. a Wilkin. p. 5, 6, 7.

made.

made [77]. The reader will find a copy of the moſt ancient of theſe doom-books in the laws of Ethelbert, the firſt Chriſtian king of Kent, in the appendix; and the moſt perfect one now extant is contained in the third book of the laws of Howel Dha [78]. If a phyſician was called, the criminal was alſo obliged to pay for the medicines, and for the maintenance both of the doctor and the patient till the cure was completed [79]. It is hardly neceſſary to obſerve, that this was a moſt unreaſonable ſyſtem of laws, and gave the rich a great advantage over the poor, which no doubt they frequently abuſed. But theſe laws were contrived to anſwer the great end of the juriſprudence of the middle ages, which was compenſation, without promoting ſufficiently the no leſs deſirable end of prevention.

Murder. The laws of the Anglo-Saxons againſt killing or murder were ſtill more unreaſonable; becauſe they attempted to make reparation for an injury which, to the perſon who ſuffered it, was irreparable. By theſe laws a certain price or value was ſet upon every man's life, from the ſovereign to the ſlave, according to his rank; and whoever killed any man was obliged to pay the price which the laws had ſet upon the life of a perſon of that rank. This price was called a man's *were* or *weregyld*, from *were* a man, and *gyldan*

77 Leges Saxon. p. 74.
78 See Append. N° 3. Leges Wallicæ, l. 3. c. 8. p. 275 to 279.
79 Id. p. 277.

to

to yield or pay, and made a capital article in the doom-book; as may be ſeen in the laws of king Athelſtan [80]. Theſe laws not only fixed the quantity of every man's *were*, but alſo directed to whom, and in what proportions, it ſhould be paid. The king's weregeld, for example, was two hundred and forty pounds, equal in quantity of ſilver to about ſeven hundred and twenty pounds, and in real value to ſeven thouſand two hundred pounds of our money; which was to be divided into two equal parts, the one of which was to be paid to the family of the murdered prince, as a compenſation for the loſs of their relation, and the other was to be paid to the public, for the loſs of their ſovereign [81]. The *were* of ſubjects of all ranks above ſlaves was paid, one half to the king, for the loſs of his ſubject, and the breach of his peace, and the other half to the family of the murdered perſon, for the loſs of their relation, and to extinguiſh their reſentment againſt the murderer; the former of which was called the *frith-bote*, from *frith* (peace) and *bote* (compenſation), and the latter *mæg-bote*, from *mæg* (kindred) and *bote* [82]. When a freeman killed his own ſlave, he had nothing to pay but a ſmall mulct to the king for breach of the peace; but when

[80] See Append. N° 3. [81] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 72.
[82] Spelman. Gloſſ. in voce Fredum. Somner and Leye's Dictionar. Saxon. voc. frith-bote, and mæg-bote.

he killed the ſlave of another perſon, beſides this mulct to the king, he was obliged to pay the value of the ſlave to his owner, which was called *man-bote*, or *man's price*[83]. If a ſlave killed a freeman, the owner of the ſlave was obliged to pay both the frith-bote to the king and the mæg-bote to the family of the murdered perſon, or to put the murderer into their hands. When a ſlave killed his own maſter, he was put to death; becauſe, having no goods and no family, he could make no compenſation: when he killed one of his fellow-ſlaves, his maſter might puniſh him as he pleaſed.

Change in the laws againſt murder.

As all the near relations of a murdered perſon received a ſhare of his mæg-bote; ſo they contributed alſo their ſhare to the payment of theſe mulcts for any of their relations who were guilty of murder; which greatly diminiſhed the terror even of theſe penalties. King Edmund, who reigned from A. D. 940 to A. D. 946, being very deſirous of giving ſome check to the frequent murders occaſioned by the unreaſonable lenity of theſe laws, particularly of the laſt, procured a law to be made, that from thenceforth the murderer himſelf ſhould be the only object of the reſentment of the injured family; and that his relations ſhould not be obliged to pay any ſhare of the penalties[84]. But though

[83] Du Cange Gloſſ. voce *Man-bote*.

[84] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 73.

this

this was an amendment, it was not ſufficient to produce the deſired effect; and therefore it was found neceſſary to depart from a maxim that had been too long eſtabliſhed in the juriſprudence of the middle ages,—"That there was no crime "that might not be expiated with money;" and to declare ſome crimes, and particularly ſome kinds of murder, inexpiable. By a law of king Ethelred, A. D. 1008, a murder committed within the walls of a church is declared to be inexpiable, without the ſpecial permiſſion of the king; and when the king granted this permiſſion (which was probably too often), the criminal was obliged to pay a mulct to the church for the violation of its protection, beſides the frith-bote to the king and the mægbote to the family[85]. Upon the whole it is ſufficiently evident, that the penal laws of the Anglo-Saxons againſt murder were the ſame in ſubſtance with thoſe of their German anceſtors; among whom murder was compenſated by the payment of a certain number of cattle; of which the whole family received a ſhare[86]. It is no leſs evident, that theſe laws were unreaſonably gentle, and very ill calculated to prevent the commiſſion of this horrid crime among a fierce people, who had arms continually in their hands.

[85] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 113.
[86] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 21.

Puniſhments for violating the honour of the fair ſex.

As the fair ſex are naturally weaker than men, and are expoſed to injuries of a peculiar kind, ſo their perſons and their honour have been protected in all civilized countries by particular laws. This is not the proper place to ſpeak of thoſe violations of chaſtity to which the woman was conſenting; becauſe, being equally guilty, ſhe was equally puniſhed with the other party. Only it may not be improper to obſerve, that the laws of the Anglo-Saxons, like thoſe of their German anceſtors, againſt adultereſſes, were very ſevere[87]. By an ordinance of king Canute, an adultereſs, beſides being declared infamous for life, and forfeiting all her goods, was condemned to have her noſe and lips cut off, that ſhe might no longer be an object of criminal deſires[88]. The Engliſh laws of this period inflicted certain pecuniary penalties on thoſe who were guilty of any attempts againſt the virtue and honour of the ſex, from the ſlighteſt indecency to the rudeſt violence; and theſe penalties were greater or ſmaller according to the rank of the injured party. The compenſation for a rape committed upon a nun, was as high as for murder, beſides the deprivation of Chriſtian burial; but one committed on a perſon of immature age, ſubjected the criminal to a mutilation which effectually prevented the repetition of the crime[89].

[87] Tacit. de morib. German. c. 19.

[88] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 142.

[89] Id. p. 40. 72.

The

The chaſtity of the ſex was guarded with great anxiety and care by the ancient laws of Wales [90].

Penalties were alſo inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon laws on thoſe who were guilty of ſeveral other crimes, which do not fall directly under any of the three preceding heads; as idolatry, ſorcery, witchcraft, perjury, forgery, coining, and high treaſon againſt the whole people, &c. [91] But theſe penalties were likewiſe, for the moſt part, pecuniary: only coiners of baſe money were condemned to loſe their right hands; and traitors againſt the whole nation were to be put to death, becauſe no compenſation could be made to a whole people for ſo great an injury [92]. In a word, the compenſation of injuries, rather than the puniſhment of crimes, ſeems to have been the great object of the penal laws of the Anglo-Saxons, and of all the other nations of Europe, in the middle ages; which is the true reaſon that pecuniary puniſhments were ſo frequent, and corporal and capital puniſhments ſo uncommon, in thoſe ages. Puniſhments of ſeveral crimes.

As crimes are commonly committed with great ſecrecy, the innocent are ſometimes ſuſpected and accuſed, and criminals often conceal and deny their guilt. To diſcover the truth, that the innocent may not be condemned, nor the Laws of evidence.

90 Leges Wallicæ, p. 78.
91 Vide Wilkins et Lambard Leges Saxon. paſſim.
92 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 59. 103.

guilty acquitted, is one of the moſt neceſſary and difficult duties of the judicial office; and therefore the laws of evidence, which have been made in every period, to direct judges in the inveſtigation of the truth, are of very great importance, and merit our attention. This ſubject is remarkably curious in the preſent period; becauſe the laws of evidence in England, and over all Europe, were then exceeding ſingular, and different from what they are at preſent.

Oaths. Oaths, or ſolemn appeals to heaven, have been the moſt ancient and moſt univerſal means employed in courts of juſtice to engage men to declare the truth: and they were never more frequently employed for this purpoſe than in the period we are now delineating; for in all actions, both civil and criminal, both parties appeared in the field of battle, attended by a prodigious number of witneſſes (ſometimes above a thouſand on one ſide), who were drawn up like two regular armies, and diſcharged whole vollies of oaths at one another.

Compurgators. When any perſon was judicially accuſed of any crime which he denied, he was obliged, in the firſt place, to purge himſelf, as it was called, by his own oath, and to bring ſuch a number of other perſons as the law required in that caſe, to give their oaths, that they believed him to be innocent, and that he had ſworn the truth [93].

93 Leges Wallicæ, p. 134.

Theſe

Theſe perſons where commonly called his *compurgators*, becauſe their oaths contributed with his own to clear him from the crime of which he had been accuſed. Many laws were made in England, and in all the other countries of Europe, for regulating the numbers, qualities, and other circumſtances of theſe compurgators; who made a diſtinguiſhed figure in the juriſprudence of the middle ages [94]. When a perſon accuſed produced the number of compurgators required by law, he was ſaid to have purged himſelf by ſuch a number of hands; becauſe each of the compurgators laid one of his hands on the goſpels, or on certain relics, and the perſon accuſed laid his hand above all the reſt, and ſwore by God, and by all the hands that were under his, that he was not guilty; the truth of which, each of the compurgators who did not withdraw his hand, was preſumed to confirm by his oath [95]. In ſome caſes, two, three, or four hands, were ſufficient; but in others much greater numbers, even forty, fifty, or a hundred, were required; though twelve, or twenty-four, ſeem to have been the moſt common numbers [96]. Theſe compurgators were to be perſons of unblemiſhed characters, near neighbours or relations of the perſon accuſed,

[94] Lindenbrog. Codex Legum Antiquarum. Du Cange Gloſſ. in voc. Juramentum.

[95] Id. ibid. Leges Alaman. apud Lindenbrog. p. 366.

[96] Du Cange Gloſſ. in voc. Juramentum. Stiernhook de Jure Sueonum, p. 118. Leges Wallicæ, p. 217.

and of the ſame rank and quality [97]. If the criminal was a woman, both law and cuſtom required that her compurgators ſhould alſo be women [98]. In other caſes, women were not admitted to be compurgators [99]. If the criminal produced the number of unexceptionable compurgators which the law required, and if all theſe compurgators took the oath of credulity or belief, as it was called, he was acquitted; but if he could not produce the number required, or if only one of that number refuſed to take the oath, he was condemned [100].

Compurgators not the ſame with jurymen.

Some writers, eminent for their learning, and particularly for their knowledge of our antiquities and laws, have been of opinion, that the compurgators of the middle ages were the genuine predeceſſors of the jurors or jurymen of later times [101]. This opinion, though ſupported by great names, is liable to ſtrong objections; and any reader who attentively conſiders the deſcription of compurgators that is given above, will perceive that they were very different in many reſpects from our modern juries. They ſeem to bear a greater reſemblance to thoſe witneſſes who do not pretend to know any thing of the fact in queſtion, but are brought to ſpeak to the character of the perſon upon trial.

97 Leges Walliceæ, p. 98. 115. 98 Id. p. 108. 79.
99 Hiſt. Elienſ. c. 84. 100 Leges Walliceæ, p. 134.
101 Spelman. Gloſſ. in voc. Jurata. Selden. Janus Anglorum, l. 2. c. 4. Lord Kames's Hiſtorical Law-tracts, ſecond edit. p. 76.

The

The compurgators were not the only perſons who gave their oaths on trials, in the middle ages; for beſides theſe, great numbers of witneſſes were ſworn on both ſides, to confirm, or to invalidate the charge [102]. But the oaths of witneſſes and compurgators were very different. Witneſſes ſwore that they knew the things which they teſtified to be true: compurgators ſwore only, that they believed the oath which had been given by the defendant was true [103]. Witneſſes.

This great multiplicity of oaths in the judicial proceedings of the middle ages, had the ſame effect that it will always have, of diminiſhing men's veneration for them, and giving occaſion to frequent perjury. The legiſlators of thoſe times employed ſeveral devices to prevent this, by awakening the conſciences, and keeping alive the religious fears of mankind. With this view, their oaths were couched in the moſt awful forms of words that could be invented; and theſe forms were frequently changed, that they might not loſe their effect by becoming too familiar [104]. An oath was not to be adminiſtered to any perſon unleſs he was perfectly ſober, and even faſting [105]. Oaths were commonly adminiſtered in a church; and for this reaſon courts were held in or near a place of public worſhip [106]. The perſon who Ceremonies in adminiſtering oaths.

[102] Leges Wallicæ, p. 132. [103] Id. p. 136.
[104] Hickeſii Diſſert. Epiſt. p. 112. Wilkins Leges Saxon. l. 63. 64.
[105] Du Cange, p. 1607. [106] Id. ibid.

took the oath, was obliged to lay his right hand upon the altar,—or upon the goſpels,—or upon a croſs,—or upon the relics of the moſt venerated ſaints [107]. Theſe, and the like circumſtances, were well calculated to make a ſtrong impreſſion on men's imaginations in thoſe ages of ignorance and ſuperſtition. To rouſe a ſenſe of honour in the breaſts of the military men, their oaths were taken with their hands upon their arms [108]. This laſt ceremony was much uſed by the Danes and Saxons, and eſteemed by them a moſt inviolable obligation to declare the truth. The curious reader will meet with a deſcription of ſome very ſingular ceremonies that were ſometimes uſed in Wales, in the adminiſtration of oaths, in the book quoted below [109]. But after all the devices that were invented by the legiſlators of the middle ages, to give ſolemnity to oaths, it is very certain that perjury was very frequent, and one of the reigning vices of thoſe times.

Oaths weighed as well as numbered.

Another very remarkable ſingularity in the laws of evidence, both in England, and in other countries of Europe, in this period, was the method of aſcertaining the degrees of credit that were due to the oaths of perſons of different ranks. In thoſe times they weighed, as well as numbered oaths, and had a moſt curious ſtandard for performing that operation. This ſtandard was the

107 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 12. Johnſon's Canons, A. D. 754.
108 Du Cange Gloſſ. p. 1617. 109 Leges Wallicæ, p. 85.

legal

legal weregeld, or price, that was ſet on the lives of perſons of all the different ranks in ſociety. As the weregeld of a thane, for example, was 1200 Saxon ſhillings, and that of a ceorl only 200 of the ſame ſhillings, the oath of one thane was eſteemed of equal weight with the oaths of ſix ceorls [118]. But this was certainly a fallacious ſtandard: for though it may be true in general, that the oaths of perſons of rank and fortune are more worthy of credit than thoſe of their inferiors, yet this general rule admits of many exceptions; and we have no reaſon to believe, that men's conſciences are ſo exactly proportioned to the weight of their purſes as this law ſuppoſes.

Origin of ordeals.

It is eaſy to perceive, from the above account of the laws of evidence, that it was no eaſy matter for the moſt innocent perſon to clear himſelf from an accuſation, eſpecially in thoſe caſes where a great multitude of compurgators was required. Many perſons, therefore, when they were accuſed of any crime, choſe rather to apply to Heaven for evidences of their innocence, than to be at the expence and labour of collecting ſo prodigious a maſs of human teſtimonies in their favour as the laws demanded. The greateſt part of the judges alſo, in thoſe times of ignorance, had neither patience nor penetration to ſift and examine the teſtimonies of contradicting witneſſes, or to inveſtigate the truth in perplexed and

[118] Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 64.

doubtful

doubtful caſes; and were therefore very willing to admit thoſe proofs from Heaven, which were ſuppoſed to be perfectly deciſive and unqueſtionable. The clergy too ſupported the authority of this celeſtial evidence, as it gave them no little influence in all judicial matters. Theſe ſeem to have been the reaſons that rendered trials by different kinds of ordeals ſo frequent, and of ſuch great authority, in the ages we are now examining; for all theſe ordeals were called *judicia Dei* (the judgments of God), and were conſidered as ſo many ſolemn and direct appeals to Heaven, to give teſtimony to the guilt or innocence of perſons accuſed of crimes, when human evidence could not be procured [111]. Agreeable to theſe ideas, all theſe ordeals were adminiſtered by the clergy, and accompanied with many religious rites and ceremonies.

Different ordeals.

It is not neceſſary to enumerate all the different kinds of ordeals that were uſed in England, and in the other countries of Europe, in this period. The moſt common were the ſix following:—the judicial combat,—the ordeal of the croſs,—the ordeal of the corſned,—the ordeal of cold water,—the ordeal of hot water,—the ordeal of hot iron.

Judicial combat.

The judicial combat being well ſuited to the genius and ſpirit of fierce and warlike nations, was one of the moſt ancient and univerſal ordeals,

[111] Du Cange Gloſſ. in voc. Judicium Dei.

and

and particularly prevailed in Germany in very remote ages [112]. This method of trial was alſo in uſe in ſeveral countries on the continent in this period [113]. But as it is not mentioned in any of the Anglo-Saxon laws, and ſeems not to have been much uſed in England till after the conqueſt, the deſcription of it muſt be remitted to the third chapter of the next book of this work.

Ordeal of the croſs.

The croſs was an object of ſo much ſuperſtitious veneration in this period, that there is no wonder it was employed as an ordeal. It was indeed uſed to this purpoſe in ſo many different ways, that they cannot be all deſcribed. In criminal trials, the judgment of the croſs was commonly thus conducted: When the priſoner had declared his innocence upon oath, and appealed to the judgment of the croſs, two ſticks were prepared exactly like one another; the figure of the croſs was cut on one of theſe ſticks, and nothing on the other; each of them was then wrapped up in a quantity of fine white wool, and laid on the altar, or on the relics of the ſaints; after which a ſolemn prayer was put up to God, that he would be pleaſed to diſcover, by evident ſigns, whether the priſoner was innocent or guilty. Theſe ſolemnities being finiſhed,

[112] See vol. 1. ch. 3. p. 333.

[113] Leges Longobard. 2. tit. 51. l. 11. Neap. 2. tit. 32, 33. Muratori, t. 3. p. 633, &c.

a prieſt

a prieſt approached the altar, and took up one of the ſticks, which was uncovered with much anxiety. If it was the ſtick marked with the croſs, the priſoner was pronounced innocent; if it was the other, he was declared guilty [114]. When the judgment of the croſs was appealed to in civil cauſes, the trial was conducted in this manner: The judges, parties, and all concerned, being aſſembled in a church, each of the parties choſe a prieſt, the youngeſt and ſtouteſt that he could find, to be his repreſentative in the trial. Theſe repreſentatives were then placed one on each ſide of ſome famous crucifix; and at a ſignal given, they both at once ſtretched their arms at full length, ſo as to form a croſs with their body. In this painful poſture they continued to ſtand while divine ſervice was performing; and the party whoſe repreſentative dropped his arms firſt loſt his cauſe [115].

Ordeal of the corſned.

The corſned, or the conſecrated bread and cheeſe, was the ordeal to which the clergy commonly appealed when they were accuſed of any crimes; in which they acted a very prudent part, as it was attended with no danger or inconveniency [116]. This ordeal was performed in this manner: A piece of barley bread, and a piece of cheeſe, were laid upon the altar, over which

114 Spelman. Gloſſ. in voc. Crucis Judicium.
115 Murator. Antiq. t. 3. p. 624.
116 Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 128.

a prieſt

a prieſt pronounced certain conjurations, and prayed with great fervency, that if the perſon accuſed was guilty, God would ſend his angel Gabriel to ſtop his throat, that he might not be able to ſwallow that bread and cheeſe [117]. Theſe prayers being ended, the culprit approached the altar, took up the bread and cheeſe, and began to eat it. If he ſwallowed freely, he was declared innocent; but if it ſtuck in his throat, and he could not ſwallow (which we may preſume ſeldom or never happened), he was pronounced guilty.

Cold water ordeal.

The ordeal of cold water ſeems to have been chiefly uſed in the trials of the common people. It was thus conducted: The perſon who was to be tried, was put under the direction of a ghoſtly father, of great reputation for his ſanctity, who obliged him to perform many extraordinary acts of devotion, and to keep a rigorous faſt for three days. When this faſt was ended, and the day appointed for the trial come, the priſoner was publicly conducted to the church, where the prieſt celebrated maſs; and before he permitted the accuſed to communicate, he addreſſed him in the following ſolemn ſtrain:—"I adjure thee, "O man, by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, "by the true Chriſtianity which you profeſs, by "the only begotten Son of God, by the Holy "Trinity, by the Holy Goſpel, and by all the

[117] Muratori Antiq. t. 3. 619. Lindenbrog. p. 1307.

"holy

"holy relics in this church, that you do not "preſume to communicate, or approach this "holy altar, if you have committed this crime, "conſented to it, or known who committed it." If the priſoner made no confeſſion, the prieſt gave him the communion, ſaying, "Let this "body and blood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be "received by you as a probation this day." After this a quantity of holy water was conſecrated, and then the whole company left the church, and went in proceſſion to the pool, where the ordeal was to be performed. When they arrived there, the prieſt gave the priſoner a drink of the holy water; ſaying, "Let this holy "water be to thee a probation this day." If the priſoner ſtill continued to deny his guilt, the prieſt then ſaid a long and very fervent prayer over the pool, adjuring it by every thing that was divine and venerable in heaven or on earth, that if the perſon to be thrown into it was guilty, it would reject him, and cauſe him to float upon its ſurface; but if he was innocent, that it would receive him into its boſom. The priſoner was then ſtripped naked, his hands and legs made faſt, and a rope tied about his middle, with a knot upon it, at the diſtance of a yard and a half from his body, and thrown into the pool. If he floated (which was hardly to be imagined) he was taken out and declared guilty; if he ſunk ſo deep as to bring the knot on the rope under the water, he was inſtantly pulled out, before he could

could receive any injury, and pronounced innocent [117]. This ordeal was evidently a very uncertain teſt of guilt or innocence; but the great ſolemnity with which it was adminiſtered, might ſometimes ſtrike terror into the minds of criminals, and bring them to confeſſion. In this ordeal it was preſumed that God would work a miracle for the detection of guilt; in the two next ordeals of hot water and hot iron, the preſumption was, that he would work a miracle for the vindication of innocence: but there was no ſolid foundation for either of theſe preſumptions.

Hot water ordeal.

The preparations by faſtings, prayers, and other religious exerciſes, for the hot water ordeal, were of the ſame kind, and of the ſame duration, with thoſe that were uſed before the ordeal of cold water. When theſe private preparations were finiſhed, the perſon to be tried was conducted with great ſolemnity to the church, where the prieſt began, by ſaying certain prayers ſuitable to the occaſion; after which maſs was celebrated; and before the accuſed was permitted to communicate, he was adjured, in the moſt awful form of words, to confeſs if he was guilty. Fire was then kindled under a pot filled with water; and while the water was heating, the prieſt ſaid many prayers compoſed

[117] Muratori Antiq. t. 3. p. 613—617. Wilkins Leges Saxon. p. 61.

for that purpoſe. As ſoon as the water began to boil, a ſtone was ſuſpended in it by a ſtring, at the depth of one, two, or three palms, according to the nature of the accuſation. The pot was then taken down and placed by the ſide of the fire; and the priſoner having ſaid the Lord's prayer (not very rapidly we may preſume), and marked himſelf with the ſign of the croſs, plunged his naked hand and arm into the water and ſnatched out the ſtone. His arm was inſtantly wrapped in linen cloths, and put into a bag, which was ſealed by the judge in the preſence of the ſpectators. The priſoner was then reſtored to the prieſt, who produced him in the ſame church at the end of three days; when the bag was opened, the bandages taken off, and the arm examined by twelve of his own friends, and twelve of the friends of the proſecutor. If any marks of ſcalding then appeared upon the arm, the priſoner was found guilty; if no ſuch marks could be diſcovered, he was acquitted [118].

Ordeal of hot iron.

The religious preparations for this ordeal were the ſame with thoſe of the former; and therefore need not be repeated. The ordeal of hot iron was of two kinds, and performed either with a ball of iron, or with a certain number of plough-ſhares. The former was conducted in this manner: A ball of iron was prepared, of

[118] Du Cange Gloſſ. in voc. Aquæ ferventis judicium.

one,

one, two, or three pounds weight, according to the nature of the accuſation. When all the prayers and other religious ceremonies were finiſhed, this ball was put into a fire, and made red-hot; after which it was taken out. The priſoner having ſigned himſelf with the croſs, and ſprinkled his hand with holy water, took the ball of hot iron in his hand, and carried it to the diſtance of nine feet; after which his hand was put into a bag, and ſealed up for three days; at the expiration of which it was examined, in the preſence of twelve perſons of each party. If any marks of burning appeared upon it, the accuſed was found guilty; if none, he was declared innocent [119]. The other way of performing this ordeal was, by making the perſon who was to be tried, to walk blindfolded, with his feet bare, over nine hot plough-ſhares, placed at certain diſtances. If he did this without being burnt, he was adjudged innocent; if not, guilty [120]. This ſeemingly dangerous ordeal of hot iron was appropriated to perſons of high rank.

If we ſuppoſe, that few or none eſcaped conviction who expoſed themſelves to theſe fiery trials, we ſhall be very much miſtaken. For the hiſtorians of thoſe times contain innumerable examples of perſons plunging their naked arms into boiling water, handling red-hot balls of iron, and walking upon burning plough-ſhares,

Theſe ordeals not dangerous.

[119] Du Cange Gloſſ. voc. Ferum candens. [120] Id. ibid.

without receiving the leaſt injury [121]. Many learned men have been much puzzled to account for this, and diſpoſed to think that Providence graciouſly interpoſed in a miraculous manner, for the preſervation of injured innocence. But if we examine every circumſtance of theſe fiery ordeals with due attention, we ſhall ſee ſufficient reaſon to ſuſpect that the whole was a groſs impoſition on the credulity of mankind. The accuſed perſon was committed wholly to the prieſt who was to perform the ceremony, three days before the trial, in which he had time enough to bargain with him for his deliverance, and give him inſtructions how to act his part. On the day of trial, no perſon was permitted to enter the church, but the prieſt and the accuſed, till after the iron was heated; when twelve friends of the accuſer, and twelve of the accuſed, and no more, were admitted, and ranged along the wall on each ſide of the church, at a reſpectful diſtance. After the iron was taken out of the fire, ſeveral prayers were ſaid, the accuſed drunk a cup of holy water, and ſprinkled his hand with it; which might take a conſiderable time, if the prieſt was indulgent. The ſpace of nine feet was meaſured by the accuſed himſelf with his own feet, and he would probably give but ſcanty meaſure. He was obliged only to touch one of the marks with the toe of his right foot,

[121] Du Cange Gloſſ. t. 3. p. 399, 400.

and allowed to ſtretch the other foot as far towards the other mark as he could; ſo that the conveyance was almoſt inſtantaneous. His hand was not immediately examined, but wrapped in a cloth, prepared for that purpoſe, three days. May we not then, from all theſe precautions, ſuſpect, that theſe prieſts were in poſſeſſion of ſome ſecret that ſecured the hand from the impreſſions of ſuch a momentary touch of hot iron, or removed all appearances of theſe impreſſions in three days; and that they made uſe of this ſecret when they ſaw reaſon? Such readers as are curious in matters of this kind may find two different directions for making ointments, that will have this effect, in the work quoted below [122]. What greatly ſtrengthens theſe ſuſpicions is, that we meet with no example of any champion of the church who ſuffered the leaſt injury from the touch of hot iron in this ordeal; but when any one was ſo fool-hardy as to appeal to it, or to that of hot water, with a view to deprive the church of any of her poſſeſſions, he never failed to burn his fingers, and loſe his cauſe [123].

If the Anglo-Saxon conſtitution, government, and laws, do not appear ſo excellent and perfect in all reſpects, in the above deſcription, as they have been ſometimes repreſented, and as the fond admirers of antiquity have been uſed to think them, the author of this work cannot help

[122] Du Cange Gloſſ. t. 3. col. 397. [123] Id. t. 1. p. 611.

it;

it; and hath nothing to say in his own defence, but that he hath used his best endeavours to discover the truth, to represent it fairly, and to guard against mistakes. It must, in particular, be evident to every intelligent reader, that many of their penal laws were founded on wrong principles; and many of their modes of trial led to wrong decisions.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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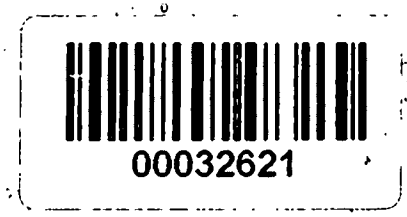
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